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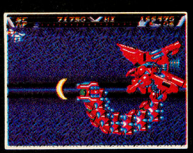
Zana Keene, trained as a test pilot at the United Government Military Academy, knew what he had given her...access to the space fighter "Chameleon" ERX-75 — capable of combat in Nether Space, and of transforming itself into a robot — the strongest weapon ever developed by the United Earth Army. Zana Keene knew what she must do. "Use this...save Earth."



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The EDITOR'S VIEW

General impressions from the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, 1991: Electronic games are still alive and kickin', and Nintendo is still coming on very strong.

Not that we had any doubts. But whenever there's a recession, the gloom-and-doom talk spreads like wildfire. And Nintendo, the unequalled success story of the late 1980s, is a natural target.

At Winter CES in Las Vegas, Nintendo reacted sharply to dark rumors of its impending decline. During a press conference held just before the show opened on January 10, Nintendo vice president Peter T. Main pointed to several headlines speculating on Nintendo's downfall and explained why he believes the company will remain a strong force through the 1990s.

True, U.S. sales of the Nintendo Entertainment System are not what they used to be. But over the past six years, Nintendo has sold nearly 30 million NES machines in the U.S. — reaching about one of every three American households, and about half of all households with children. That's a remarkable record.

Thanks in part to the enormous popularity of the Game Boy and such NES titles as *Super Mario Bros. 3*, Nintendo's overall sales are still growing. Since its debut in February 1990, *Super Mario 3* alone has reaped revenues of more than $427 million. In fact, if *Super Mario 3* were a movie instead of a videogame, it would rank second only to *E.T.* as the largest-grossing movie in history!

Nintendo's next big move is to bring its 16-bit home videogame system, the Super Famicom, to the U.S. this fall. (See "Nintendo News," page 24.) Of course, Nintendo is a latecomer — Sega and NEC have already been selling their 16-bit game systems in the U.S. for more than a year. Have Sega and NEC captured the beachhead, or are they merely priming the pump?

One thing that will help Sega and NEC is Nintendo's recent decision to drop its so-called "exclusivity rule." Until now, independent companies that were licensed by Nintendo to make NES games had to wait at least two years before releasing those games for competing systems.

The computer game market is quite different. Computer software companies commonly release titles for several systems almost simultaneously. For instance, you don't have to buy a certain brand of computer to play *Tetris* — it's available for IBM compatibles, the Amiga, Atari ST, Macintosh, Commodore 64, and Apple II. But you can't play the cartridge version of *Tetris* unless you have an NES or Game Boy.

Now that Nintendo has dropped its exclusivity rule, the videogame market will open up. Nintendo-licensed companies such as Sunsoft, which scored a big hit on the NES with *Batman*, are free to release their top games for the Sega Genesis and NEC TurboGrafx-16. Sunsoft already has a Sega version of *Batman* that until now could be sold only in Japan.

This change is good for everyone — especially game companies and game players. It benefits the game companies by allowing them to spread their increasing development costs over a larger number of systems. And it obviously benefits game players by making more games available. There will be less chance of missing out on a hit title just because you bought one particular game system instead of another.

Despite the uncertainties the world is facing in 1991, we're optimistic that the 1990s are shaping up as an exciting decade for electronic entertainment.

Tom R. Halfhill
Editor, *Game Player's*

GP

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MegaMan® 3. Anything else you need to know?

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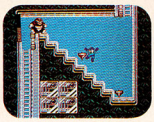
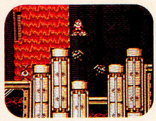


It's hard to top TopMan's dangerous spins.



You and your sidekick Rush will fly over enemy territory to avoid the walking time bombs.

SnakeMan, HardMan, GeminiMan, MagnetMan, NeedleMan, ShadowMan, SparkMan and TopMan. They're the eight new robotmasters in MegaMan 3. Defeat them all and you'll still have Dr. Wily to deal with. And possibly even a few of your old enemies from 1 and 2. Okay, now the only question that remains is how fast you can get to the store and get 3.

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April 1991

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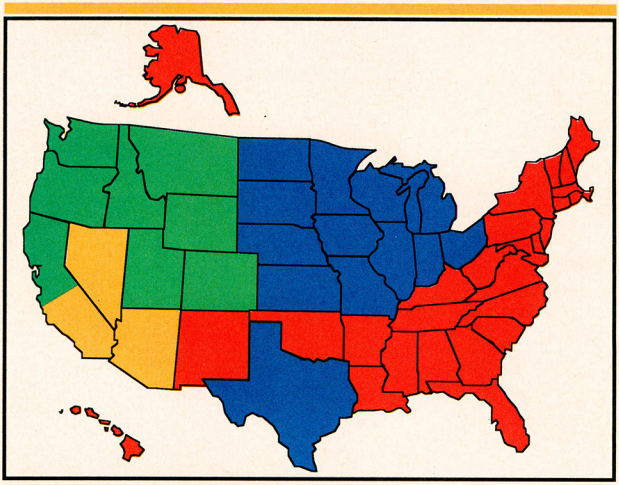

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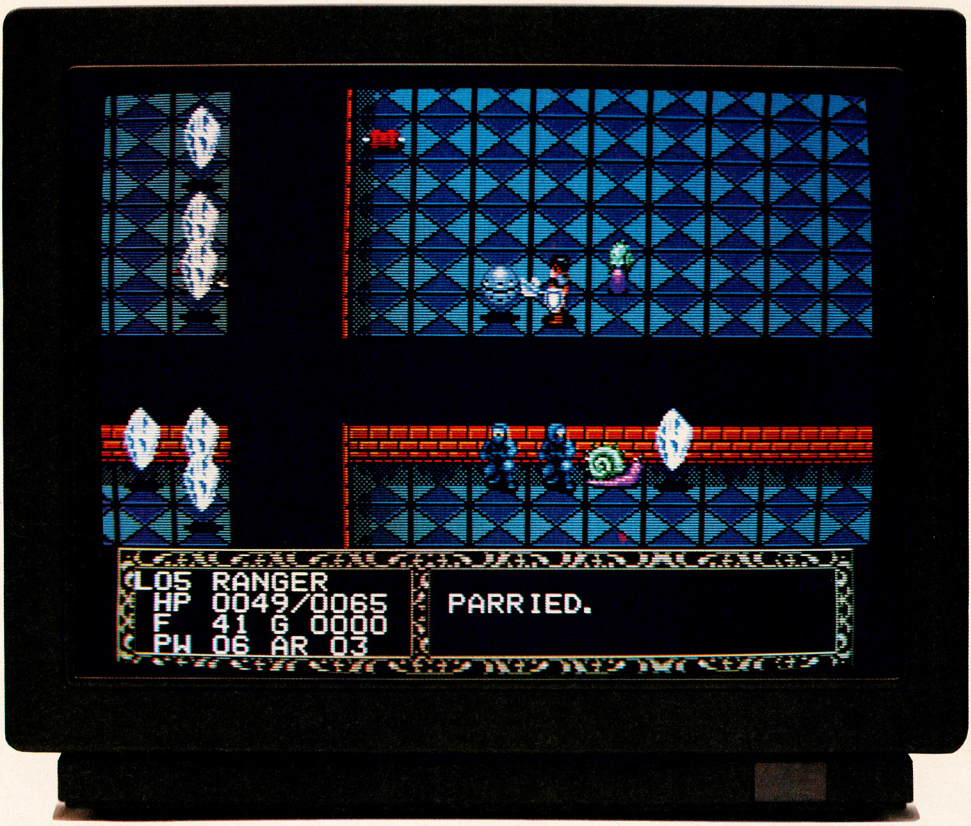

FATAL LABYRINTH:
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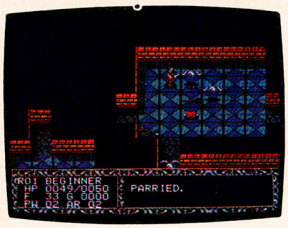
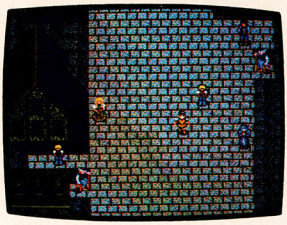


FATAL LABYRINTH:
Create your own journey each time you play. Search for weapons, magic, armor, shields, and food in rooms that mysteriously appear as you travel.



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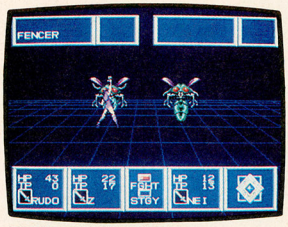

PHANTASY STAR II:
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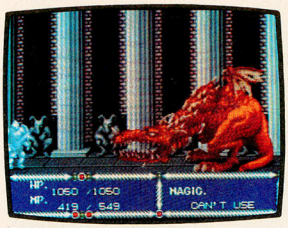

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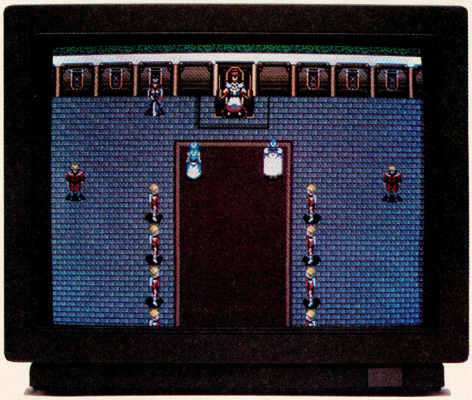

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Super Mario Bros. 2

In the Nintendo game *Super Mario Bros.* 2, how do you beat Wart? Every time I get there, he kills me. Can you help?

Luke Reed
Arizona

You'll notice that there's a machine spitting out vegetables in the center of the room. Catch a vegetable as it falls. Now make your way to the platform directly in front of Wart and toss the vegetable in his mouth. Wart must be allergic to vitamin A, because when you've fed him enough vegetables, he's done for.

Final Fantasy Legend

In *Final Fantasy Legend* for the Game Boy, I'm hopelessly stuck on one part. I've made it past the Gen-Bu dragon and have beaten the dragon in the whirlpool. But when I go to the old man in the hut, he says, "What do you get for two longswords, three gold helms, and four potions?" After I go back to him, he zaps me. Where do I find the item(s) he wants?

Corey Dyck
British Columbia, Canada

Buy a battle sword for your lead character. Then go back to the old man, and he'll give you the item.

TIP SHEET

Do you have any questions about your favorite videogames or computer games? Or do you have any hints and tips to share with your fellow game players? If so, write to The Tip Sheet, *Game Player's*, P.O. Box 29364, Greensboro, NC 27429. Due to the volume of mail we receive, we regret that we cannot reply individually by mail to game questions.

Super Hydlide

In *Super Hydlide* for the Sega Genesis, I can't defeat Kaizack. I have the fairy-made helmet, the shield, and the mail with the flaming sword, but I still can't kill him. I have tried for quite some time. Please help me — are there any tips for defeating him?

Scott Cussom
New Hampshire

First, shoot the humps on his back, then shoot his mouth. Finally, jump inside his mouth and keep shooting until he's destroyed.

IronSword: Wizards & Warriors II

Help! How do you defeat the four elementals on the last stage of *IronSword* for Nintendo?

Pat Coyne
California

Climb the mountain slowly so the elementals will attack you only one at a time. When one attacks, quickly retreat down the mountain and fight it on level ground. When you've destroyed it, repeat the procedure until you've destroyed all the elementals one by one.

Alex Kidd in Miracle World

I'm stuck in *Alex Kidd in Miracle World* for the Sega Master System. I can't get past the red castle that appears over the river near Cragg Lake. Which way am I to go? Also, I can't find the Sun Stone Medallion, the Moonlight Stone Medallion, the Gold Crown, or the Hirotta Stone.

Patrick Hanrahan
New York

It's a room that is empty except for a trapdoor. Instead of falling through the trapdoor and trying to swim through the room of spikes, use your Cane of Flight to go through the small opening in the upper right corner of the room with the trapdoor.

You have one stone medallion from the beginning of the game, and you can get the other from Janken the Great at the end of the red castle. The gold crown is found in the next stage.

Skate or Die 2

I'm having trouble on the final level of *Skate or Die* 2 for Nintendo. I can't find the way through, and I can't find the building permit. Can you please help me?

Jason Ramos
New York

Unfortunately, we can't — the final stage of Skate or Die 2 *is one of those areas you simply cannot navigate without a map. You must draw a map as you move through the game so you can locate the right power-ups when you need them.*

Crystalis

In *Crystalis* for Nintendo, how do you use the Rabbit Boots? I know you use them to climb the icy slopes, but when I select them and try to climb a slope, nothing happens. I've tried everything!

Kirk Shimano
California

To use the Rabbit Boots, simply press one of the buttons on your controller after you've selected the boots from your inventory. This will allow you to jump.

Bonk's Adventure

I have two tips for *Bonk's Adventure* for the NEC TurboGrafx-16. First, in level 5-3, Bonk falls into water. To skip swimming all the way around to get to the skull elevator, stay on top of the water in the right-hand corner of the screen. When your head is halfway out of the water, jump and spin while pushing right on the directional pad. Walk to your right, and you'll end up at the first skull elevator.

On level 31, there's a row of bones in front of you. Set button II to the highest turbo setting. If you get a good running start, you'll land on another platform. Walk to the right, and you'll have skipped the next levels.

I also have a question. Are TurboGrafx games compatible with PC Engine games?

Nick Carnevale
New Jersey

Thanks for the tips. TurboGrafx game cartridges aren't compatible with the PC Engine (the Japanese version of the TurboGrafx) — but CD games will work on either system if you have the appropriate CD drive.

King's Quest

Hi! I have *King's Quest* for home computers. I need to know three things. First, there are three things you need to beat this game — a magic chest, a magic mirror, and a magic shield. I can't find the magic shield. Where is it?

Next, there is a note you get from the witches' house. It says, "Sometimes it is wise to think backwards." What does this mean? And finally, what is the purpose of the well?

Terrance Patterson
Alabama

You can find the magic shield by visiting the lair of the Leprechaun King. There's a tiny hole you must find and crawl through — but you'd better taste a magic mushroom first.

The note by the witch's bed is a hint for solving the riddle of the gnome's name. And finally, you need to climb down the well — not only to get water, but also to find the dragon's cave. One of the three magic items is hidden there.

GP

PAC-MAN'S BACK AND GAME BOY'S GOT HIM!

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The arcade classic Pac-Man makes his Game Boy™ debut in this sensational new release from Namco. Relive the adventure as you munch your way through twisting mazes filled with power pellets, bonus fruit, and those wicked ghosts! Beware of their touch- they've been known to snack on Pac's.

Hook up with a friend to double the excitement in this first 2-player Pac-Man.™ Determine the challenge by choosing the number of lives you'll need to defeat your opponent. Add fuel to the rivalry by using the handicap feature which allows two players to begin in different rounds. Gulp down a ghost and shoot'em to your opponent's maze!

There's Ghosts to gobble so get Pac'n.

namco
The Game Creator

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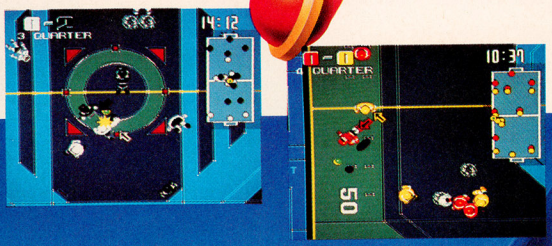
POWERBALL™



SMASH
INTO THE FUTURE

In a futuristic sports arena, you're running upfield, free and clear, when WHAM! your opponent slams into you with a bone-jarring tackle knocking the ball loose. On defense, switch control to your nearest player, then devastate the ball handler with a lightning spin kick, forcing another fumble. Now pick it up and sprint upfield. Then cut back to evade tacklers, fake the goalie, and bust through for a touchdown!

namco 2 PLAYERS

This is Powerball, the sports game where teams of armored athletes hammer each other in a furious slug-fest. Powerball combines skills from martial arts, football, and rugby. Each of the twelve teams boasts a unique level of skills. Whether you compete against the computer or a friend, you'll thrill to the action of Powerball, the smash sport of the future.

For more information write:
Namco, Hometek Inc. 3255-1 Scott Blvd. Suite 102 Santa Clara, CA 95054-3013.

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namco
The Game Creator

THE MIRACLE PIANO TEACHING SYSTEM

Gary Meredith

Learning to play the piano has always centered on the one-to-one relationship between the student and the teacher. Even when piano instruction evolved to include such things as piano labs (rooms with wall-to-wall electric pianos) or the rote-learning concepts of the Suzuki method, the basic student-teacher interaction was still there.

The basic components of the Miracle system are a keyboard synthesizer, a teaching cartridge, and an instruction manual.

With the Miracle Piano Teaching System, however, Software Toolworks aims to take music instruction along an entirely different route. Your teacher is a clever computer program neatly contained in a standard Nintendo cartridge. Your piano is a versatile keyboard synthesizer that plugs directly into the Nintendo Entertainment System. With this package, the intensity and speed of instruction is left up to you, the student. To be sure, there are already a number of audio and video self-teaching tapes on the market, but none can offer the degree of interaction possible with the Miracle.

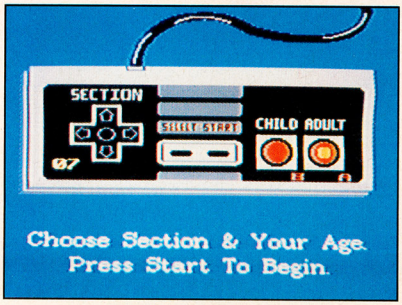
The $349 Miracle system starts with the keyboard synthesizer, which is specially designed to work with the teaching software. However, the synthesizer can also be used as a stand-alone instrument without a Nintendo machine or the teaching cartridge. The keyboard can even be plugged into a sequencer or similar devices via its built-in MIDI IN and MIDI OUT ports. (*MIDI* stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface, a well-established standard throughout the music industry.)

There are three options for sound output (four if you count the MIDI ports). You can play music through the keyboard's built-in, four-inch stereo speakers; listen privately with stereo earphones (included); or use standard audio cables to connect the synthesizer to any stereo system or boom box that has AUDIO IN jacks.

PLAYING BY NUMBERS
NOW LET'S GIVE EACH FINGER A NUMBER SO WE CAN GET THEM IN THE RIGHT PLACE ON THE KEYBOARD. THE NUMBERS ARE:
1 = THUMB
2 = INDEX
3 = MIDDLE
4 = RING
5 = PINKY.
PLAY THE NOTES UNDER YOUR FINGERS FROM 1 TO 5. PRESS 'A' WHEN YOU'RE READY TO START.
B=BEGIN, B=BACK, SELECT=OPTIONS
SECTION 01.01

The first few lessons may seem almost painfully basic to some, but they do provide an excellent foundation in technique.

By pressing various buttons on the synthesizer, you can create 128 different sounds and effects, including piano, electric piano, harpsichord, organ, guitar, bass, saxophone, various orchestral instruments, and percussion. The synthesizer is *16-note polyphonic*, meaning up to 16 keys can be held down at once to produce sounds. (It also means that several of these polyphonic channels can be assigned to



Each course consists of 36 lessons, and there are separate courses tailored to the abilities of adults and children.

(continued on page 20...)

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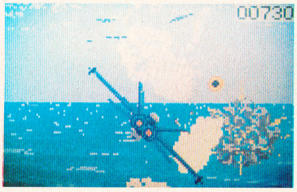
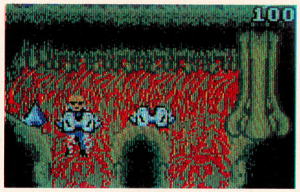


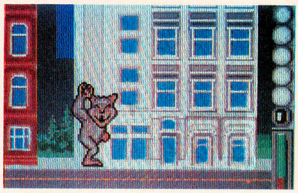
Why mow the lawn when you can bomb oncoming planes and destroy secret military bases in nine action missions with **BLUE LIGHTNING.**



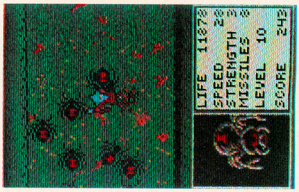
After dinner, you can always battle maggots, blood-flies and drools in the dangerous 8 player game – **SLIME WORLD.**

RYGAR, *the 2 player arcade hit that pits you against ferocious beasts, hideous demons or worse, your best friend.*

PAPERBOY. *Fling papers at non-subscribers, race your bicycle on people's lawns — in other words, the ultimate afterschool job.*



RAMPAGE. *Become a 60 ft. beast, demolish buildings and eat tanks as an army attempts to destroy you. Up to 4 players can take part in the destruction.*



Encounter loathsome beings. Escape from horrible creatures. It's you against the evil empire in the game of **GAUNTLET.**

Warm up the brain cells. Condition those fingers. Break out the antacid.

The new Lynx cartridges are here.

Twelve of the roughest, toughest, most challenging game cartridges in the Cosmos.

And now you can play them on earth. In fact, anywhere on earth. Because the Lynx is the world's first portable, color video game system.

With its totally unique 16 bit graphics engine,

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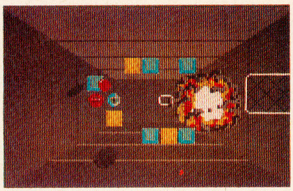
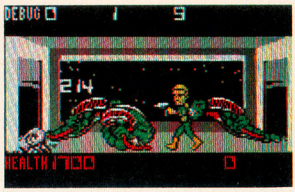
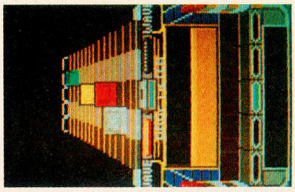
g Scenes May ic For Adults.



ROBO SQUASH. *The ultimate paddle game. The goal is to squash the enemy and line up four globes in a row to win. But be careful, three splats and you're out.*

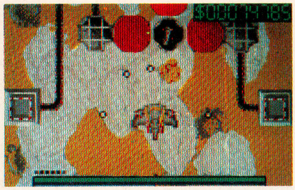


XENOPHOBE. *Trapped in a space station, you must destroy the aliens. Side-scrolling adventure for up to 4 players.*

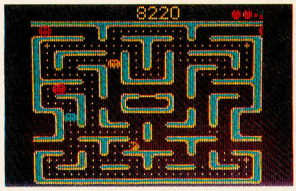


KLAX. *Maneuver your platform. Catch the falling bricks. Stack 'em for points. And try to do it all before your dad asks to borrow it.*

ROAD BLASTER. *Drive and avoid mines, exploding towers and enemy vehicles for points and make it through 50 levels. Great to play in the back of the car.*



It's a galactic shoot out between you and aliens in the 4 player game **ZARLOR MERCENARY.** *Your only hope is to kill them all or break for lunch.*



Help **MS. PACMAN** *escape the marauding ghosts by guiding her through multiple mazes gobbling up dots, energizers, fruits and pretzels.*

the Lynx lets you play arcade quality games that really look like arcade games. In 4 channel sound. Play by yourself. With one opponent. Two opponents. Three opponents. Or you can even link up with seven other players on certain games.

So if you don't already own a Lynx, you better hurry. Because they're going fast. And so are all these game cartridges.

Visit the videogame section in your favorite store now.

Before they're wiped out.

ATARI LYNX™

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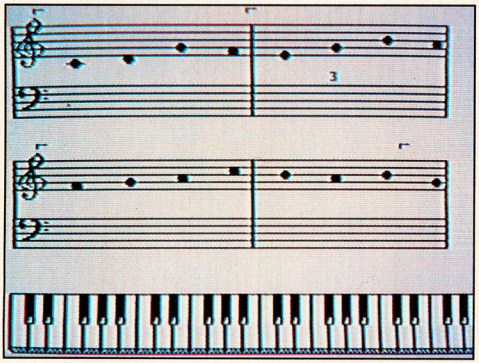


Early on, the Miracle stresses the development of sight reading, along with exercises that strengthen hand-eye coordination.

CARMEN: HABANERA
DID YOU NOTICE A NEW MUSICAL SYMBOL? THE '𝄿' IS A SIXTEENTH REST. THAT IS, A REST AS LONG AS A '𝅘𝅥𝅯'.
TRY TO FEEL THE RHYTHM IN THE DOTTED EIGHTH-SIXTEENTH PAIRS AS YOU TAP THE LEFT HAND. THE MIRACLE WILL PLAY THE NOTES FOR YOU.
A=BEGIN, B=BACK, SELECT=OPTIONS
SECTION 36.02

The Chalkboard screen not only teaches notation and gives you tips on technique, but also attempts to foster a feel for each particular musical piece.

background instruments, still leaving plenty of channels free for your own playing.) A foot pedal works just like the sustain pedal on a traditional piano.

The keyboard has 49 full-size keys that are *velocity-sensitive*, so the harder you strike a key, the louder the note. The keys are not weighted, however, which would allow for smoother key action. Nevertheless, the transition to a standard piano shouldn't be a big problem.

Setting up the Miracle is easy. Just plug in the keyboard's power supply, plug the keyboard into controller port 1 on the NES, connect a standard game controller to port 2, and insert the teaching cartridge.

The Miracle's welcome screen allows you to choose between courses designed for adults or children, and where in the course of 36 lessons you want to begin. (This lets you pick up where you left off from previous sessions.)

In either mode, the first few lessons are intended to introduce you to the basics: note names on the keyboard, finger and hand placement, simple rhythm, and how to read music notation. An excellent manual enhances each lesson and provides some general background on music, the piano, and the capabilities of the Miracle keyboard.

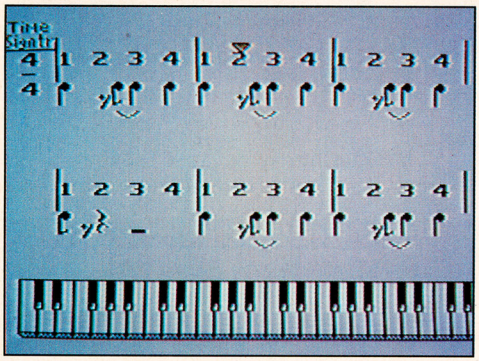
These first lessons are quite good. They allow you to plunge into playing the keyboard without the worry of drowning in a swamp of confusing concepts and nomenclature. After each exercise, the Miracle grades your progress and makes suggestions.

One of the most remarkable features of the Miracle is its ability to customize its lessons to your individual performance. For instance, if the Miracle notices that you're having trouble coordinating your left hand, it tailors the next exercise to give you more left-hand practice.

Particularly helpful is the way in which the system instills a sense of rhythm. In addition to playing through the keyboard exercises, you must also play with Roboman—a musical robot who needs your help. By playing various rhythmic figures, you can help Roboman make it through a videogame-like adventure.

This videogame approach to piano teaching is used for other basic lessons as well. For example, to develop your sight-reading abilities, you play a variation of *Duck Hunt* in which you shoot ducks flying across a musical staff superimposed on a hunting scene. To score a hit, you have to play the note or chord that matches the duck's position.

Throughout the course, you



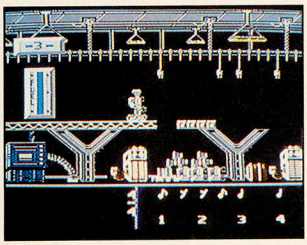
Every lesson allows the student to learn the rhythms of the practice piece without having to worry about the correct notes.

have the opportunity to visit the Practice Room, where you can rehearse several different songs. If you want, you can play along with the "Software Toolworks Orchestra" (preprogrammed background music) or with Roboman and the ducks.

From the very beginning, the Miracle takes great pains to forge an alliance between your eyes and your hands — and succeeds. In demo mode, the TV screen always shows the notes being played on both the keyboard and the staff. But even from lesson 1, you are encouraged to sight-read, to play without consciously thinking about where your hands are on the keyboard.

Don't expect to get away with a half-hearted effort in any of the lessons. The Miracle's attention never wavers, so it catches even the slightest mistakes. In fact, the Miracle is designed to detect 200 different errors. The Chalkboard screen displays customized messages to give you help for each error. It's particularly touchy about rhythms and note durations, and it'll keep you going over the same exercises until you get them exactly right. I'd almost swear my old piano teacher could have been the model for the programming. (The Miracle is a lot gentler with its criticisms, however.)

In the Practice Room, each lesson piece can be demonstrated, played solo, or performed with the background accompaniment of the "Software Toolworks Orchestra."



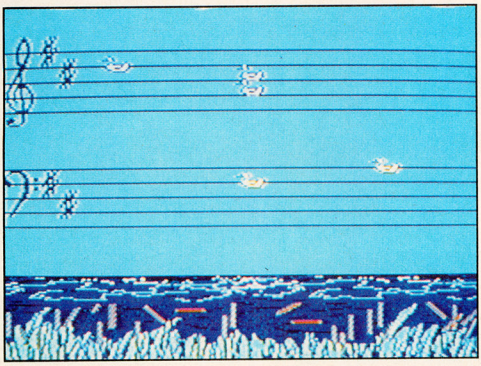
The Roboman game is designed to illustrate specific rhythm figures. It's especially helpful in some of the later, more rhythmically sophisticated lessons.

Is the Miracle really the answer for every would-be piano student? Yes and no. Those who can benefit most from the system are adults and very young children. For adults, the Miracle solves the problem of how to schedule lessons around a full-time job. Adults who are considering piano lessons are usually self-motivated enough to take advantage of what the Miracle has to offer.

Young children, on the other hand, can benefit from the Miracle's emphasis on the mechanics of playing. A good grounding in these basics would certainly ease the transition to a private teacher, should the youngster show promise and sustained interest.

For those who desire extensive keyboard training, the Miracle is certainly no substitute for a human teacher. When you learn to play music from a machine, it's natural that your playing tends to become rather machinelike. Rhythmic, dynamic, and harmonic nuances are still the territory of a skilled piano teacher.

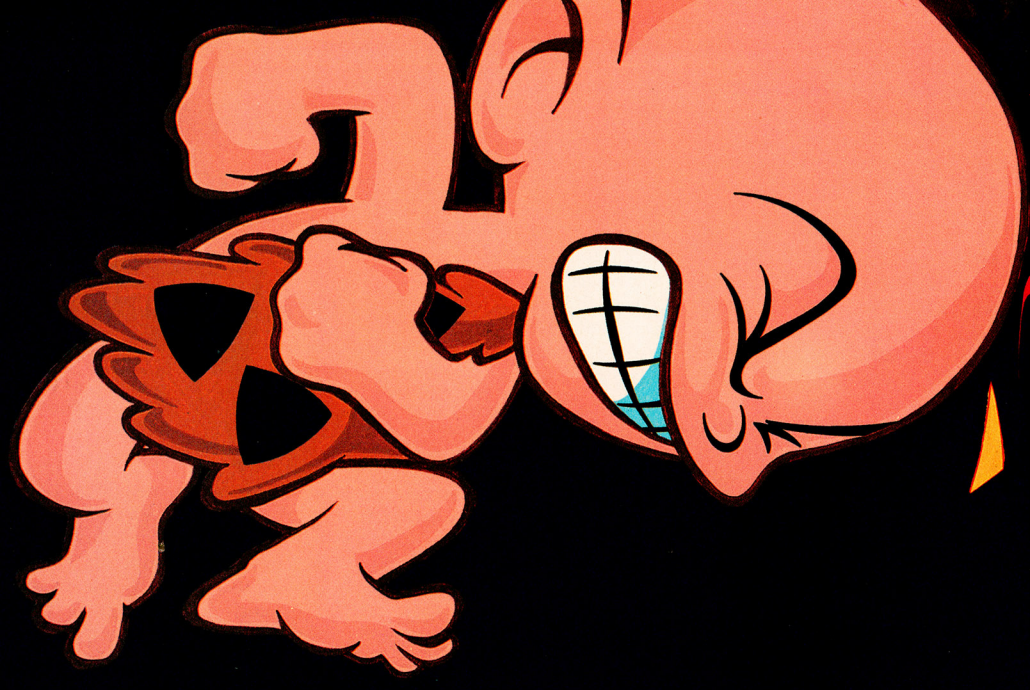
What the Miracle *can* give you is a basic understanding of piano playing and sight reading that's easy to build upon. It's a great new application for the NES, and more fun than we ever believed piano lessons could be.



The Duck Hunt game builds sight-reading abilities. Hit the right notes or chords to zap the flying ducks.

Assistant Editor Gary Meredith has been a musician for more than 30 years and has taught both woodwinds and guitar.

GP



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Because now you get Bonk's Adventure, the most popular 16-bit video game of all time, completely free.

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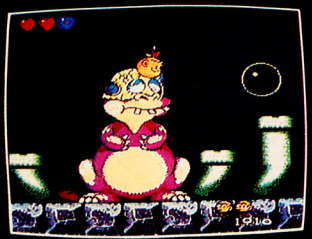
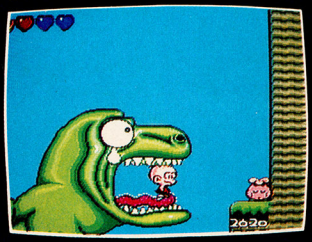
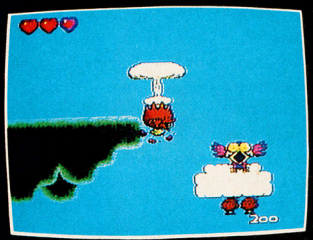


As Bonk, you must battle Huey, the first Boss. Huey is hypnotized, so he forgets he's really your friend. Just keep bonking him on the head to jog his memory.

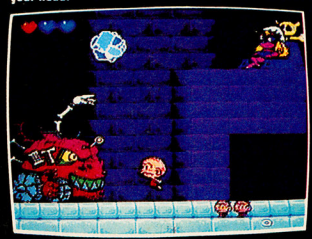
Look for more lives inside the dinosaur. Also remember to check every cave entrance and bonk all walls to find secret bonuses.

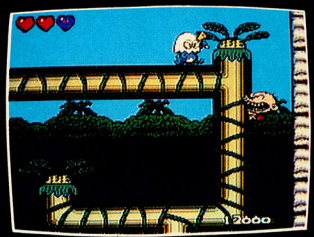




Meat helps Bonk get fired up to beat the bad guys. Like all fast food, you never know when you'll come across it, so keep your eyes peeled.

A most heinous boss, Tractor Head, has a deadly beanball fight with Bonk. You can beat him, just use your head.





Sometimes Bonk needs to climb to get where he's going. Since they hadn't invented the ladder in 10,000 B.C., he uses his teeth.

TURBO 16 GRAFX

NEC

Offer good at participating retailers while supplies last.

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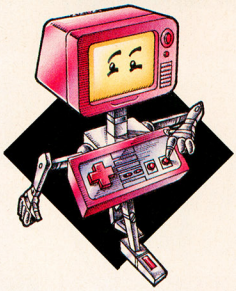


NINTENDO NEWS

Hot News From CES

Tom R. Halfhill

1 Nintendo's 16-bit Super Famicom will be redesigned for the American market and released here later this year.

2 *StarTropics* is a new action-adventure game from Nintendo. Your mission: Rescue your kidnapped uncle, a world-famous archaeologist.

Nintendo has made it official: Its second-generation videogame system, the 16-bit Super Famicom, will begin appearing in U.S. stores this fall.

That news is hardly unexpected, of course — it's been predicted for at least a year — but it does end many months of official silence on Nintendo's marketing plans for the Super Famicom.

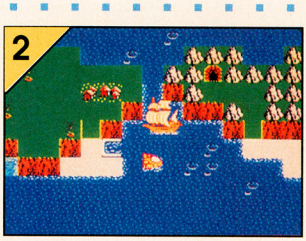
American game players can now start getting ready for the system's arrival.

Nintendo's announcement was just one of many events we covered at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, held in Las Vegas in January. Here are some more highlights:

•Nintendo unveiled the new Four-Player Adapter for the Game Boy, similar to the NES Satellite and NES Four Score devices for the Nintendo Entertainment System. Meanwhile, Bullet-Proof Software was showing prototypes of an adapter that allows *at least ten* Game Boys to be linked together for multiplayer games.

•Nintendo introduced two exciting new NES titles: *StarTropics*, an action-adventure game placed on a tropical island; and *Sim City*, based on the hit computer game in which players build and manage their own metropolis.

•A live-action movie entitled *The Super Mario Bros.* will begin production this year and is expected to reach theaters in the summer of 1992. It's described as a comedy-adventure for both youngsters and adults. The role of Mario is to be played by Danny DeVito, the star of *Twins*, *Throw Momma from the Train*, *Ruthless People*, *Taxi*, and numerous other hit movies and TV shows. The script is by the same screenwriter who did *Rain Man*, and the producers are the same folks who made such award-winning films as *Dances with Wolves*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Gandhi*, and *The Killing Fields*.



•Nintendo is following up its hugely successful Nintendo World Championships with the first Nintendo Campus Challenge. This year-long competition will visit 50 universities and popular spring-break areas throughout the U.S. to determine the "college valedictorian of videogames." Contestants will play a new variation of the three-part game that was specially designed for the Nintendo World Championships — a combination of *Dr. Mario*, *Rad Racer*, and *Super Mario Bros. 3*. There will be categories for both men and women, and all finalists will receive round-trip airfare to the January 1992 championship. Prizes include new cars and cash scholarships.

•Nintendo announced that it will no longer restrict licensed software companies from making versions of Nintendo games for other videogame systems. Until now, Nintendo licensees had to wait at least two years before releasing a game for a rival machine such as the Sega Genesis and NEC TurboGrafx-16. Nintendo's decision opens the door to simultaneous releases of videogames on multiple systems.

•American Video Entertainment, a nonlicensed maker of NES-compatible games, says Nintendo recently changed the circuitry in the NES to keep it from working with AVE's game cartridges. The modified circuitry affects carts made by some other nonlicensed companies as well. As a result, AVE has sued Nintendo in federal court.

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5. For a list of major winners send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Gauntlet II Sweepstakes Winners List, P.O. Box 4087, Marblehead, MA 01947.

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NINTENDO NEWS

The Super NES

Several months ago we forecast that Nintendo would officially debut the American version of the Super Famicom at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in June 1991, then begin selling the 16-bit system in U.S. stores in the fall. It appears we guessed correctly.

Although the Super Famicom was at the recent Winter CES, it was the Japanese version (which went on sale in that country last November), not the upcoming American version. Also, it was not part of Nintendo's main exhibit. Instead, Nintendo set up a small enclosed theater for short demonstrations of three Super Famicom games: *Super Mario World*, *F-Zero*, and *PilotWings*. (We commented on two of those titles in the March issue of *Game Player's*, based on our early testing with a Japanese Super Famicom.) Nintendo revealed very few details about the American version of the machine, and no U.S. price has been announced.

A few tidbits of information are available, though. For instance, Nintendo projects it will sell two million 16-bit systems in the U.S. alone this year. That's a tremendous number, considering that the machine probably won't appear in stores until August or September and will likely cost twice as much as an NES. Some observers think Nintendo's projection is a safe estimate, while others (competitors, mainly) dismiss it as hopelessly optimistic.

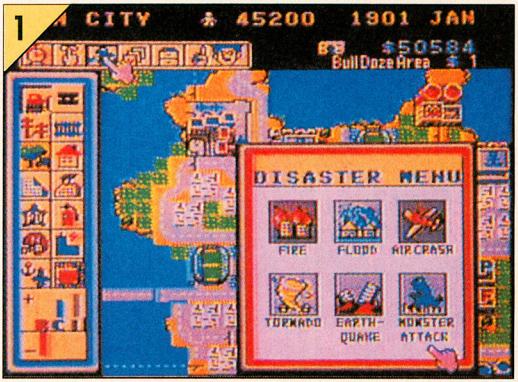
Although there won't be any significant internal changes in the American version of the Super Famicom, Nintendo will reportedly add a security chip, similar to the one inside the NES. This would make it more difficult for companies not licensed by Nintendo to produce compatible cartridges.

As mentioned above, though, Nintendo is relaxing its so-called "exclusivity rule" which formerly restricted licensed companies from making games for competing systems. Companies licensed by Nintendo are now free to release their titles for any videogame machines they want, anytime they want. The new policy applies to both 8-bit and 16-bit games.

Nintendo also indicated that the Super Famicom's housing would be redesigned for the U.S. market. As one spokesman put it, the American version will "probably look considerably different" from the Japanese version.

That's hardly a surprise, of course. The Japanese version of the eight-bit Nintendo, called the Famicom (Family Computer), doesn't look anything like the American and European NES. Sega redesigned and renamed its Japanese Mega Drive before introducing it in America as the Genesis, and NEC did likewise with its Japanese PC-Engine, releasing it in the U.S. as the TurboGrafx-16. Typically, American versions of Japanese videogame machines are enclosed in larger plastic housings.

And what will the Super Famicom be named when it's released in America? That question seems to have inspired an informal trivia contest among industry observers. For now, most people simply use the Japanese name, while others predict it will be called the SFX. Nintendo, however, is currently referring to it as the Super NES.



1 Nintendo adapted *Sim City* from a hit computer game by Maxis Software. As a big-city mayor, you have to plan and manage the development of a growing metropolis.

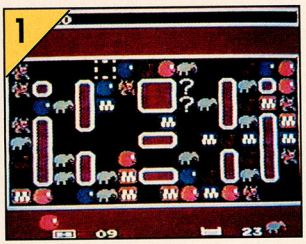
More Nintendo Games

The small theater where Nintendo was demonstrating the Super Famicom was just a tiny part of Nin-tendo's mammoth exhibit at Winter CES. Most of the pavilion was occupied by companies showing off new games. The majority of those titles were listed in the March issue of *Game Player's*, and we'll be covering more of them in the months to come. But Nintendo occupied center stage with two new NES games — *StarTropics* and *Sim City* — and the new Game Boy

NINTENDO NEWS

Four-Player Adapter.

StarTropics is a colorful action-adventure placed on a lush tropical island. As Mike, a teenage baseball star, you journey through a mazelike wilderness in search of your uncle, Dr. J. It seems that Dr. J, a famous archaeologist, has been mysteriously abducted by parties unknown. During your quest, you'll meet many interesting characters and receive help from friendly native villagers.



1 Some game cartridges produced by nonlicensed companies, such as *Krazy Kreatures* from American Video Entertainment, may be incompatible with the latest version of the NES.

StarTropics, scheduled to be available immediately, is one of the largest games ever designed for the eight-bit Nintendo. Its four-megabit cartridge is one-third larger than *Super Mario Bros. 3*. In fact, *StarTropics* is as large as some 16-bit videogames.

Sim City is based on a hit computer title from Maxis Software. (In 1989, the IBM-compatible version won our Game Player's Award for Best PC Game of the Year.) This unique game lets you plan and manage the development of your own major city. You decide where to construct highways, mass-transit systems, and major buildings. You decide whether to zone certain areas for commercial or residential development. You decide how much money to raise from taxes.

As the city's population grows, it's your responsibility to manage that growth wisely. If you make all the right decisions, your city might end up with an efficient downtown area surrounded by orderly suburbs. Or it might deteriorate into a chaotic, polluted metropolis strangled by traffic jams and populated by unhappy citizens. (Sounds like a few cities we know.)

Sim City will be most appreciated by older players, and is educational as well as fun. A version for the Super Famicom is also in the works.

For the Game Boy, Nintendo's new Four-Player Adapter doubles the number of people who can link their hand-held systems together for multiplayer games. The first title to take advantage of the adapter is Nintendo's own *F-1 Race*, a fast-action game based on Formula 1 auto racing. One to four players can compete against each other on 14 different racetracks. *F-1 Race* will come packaged with the Four-Player Adapter for $29.95.

For more Game Boy news, don't miss the "Game Boy Players" column elsewhere in this issue.

Will They Play?

Any game cartridge made to play on the NES will work on any NES machine, right? Not necessarily.

Be aware that some game carts made by companies not licensed by Nintendo of America may not work on certain NES machines.

American Video Entertainment, one of about half a dozen nonlicensed companies that make NES-compatible game cartridges, says Nintendo recently modified the NES to keep it from working with AVE's game carts. AVE charges that the modification serves no other purpose, and the company has filed a lawsuit against Nintendo in U.S. federal court to stop similar modifications in the future.

The modification does not affect any licensed game carts — those labeled with Nintendo's Official Seal of Quality. But it does affect games from other nonlicensed companies which share the same cartridge technology. Those companies include Color Dreams, Bunch Games, and American Game Cartridges. However, the modification does not affect carts made by Tengen, the largest publisher of nonlicensed Nintendo games.

AVE and the other companies say they have since modified their game carts to make them compatible again, and that only a very small percentage of the nearly 30 million NES machines in the U.S. are involved.

It will be up to a federal court to balance the two issues in this case: Nintendo's freedom to modify its hardware versus AVE's charge that Nintendo's action is illegally restraining free trade. No court decision is expected for many months.

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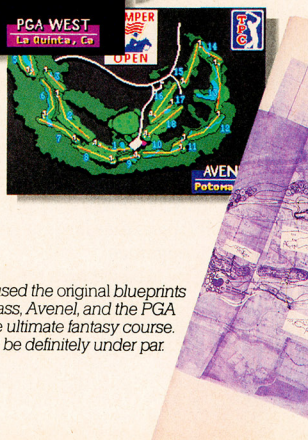
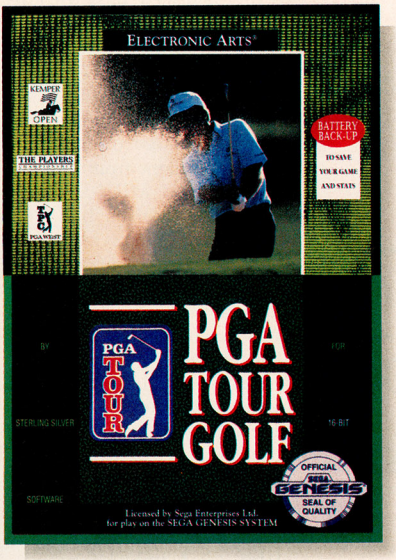


Take a real course in golf. We used the original blueprints that built the TPC's at Sawgrass, Avenel, and the PGA West Stadium Course. Plus the ultimate fantasy course. Anything else you try will be definitely under par.



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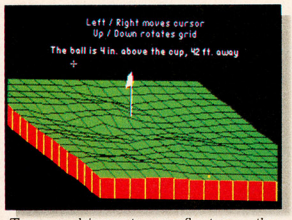
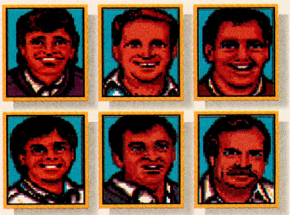
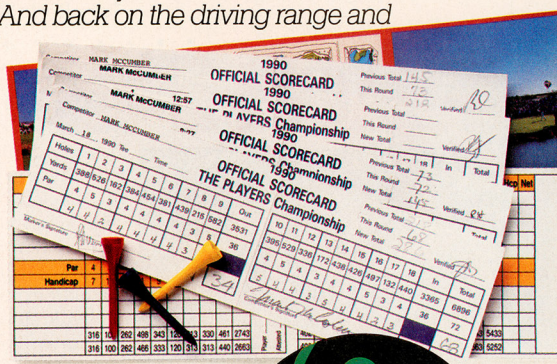
Call 800-245-4525 to order. Or visit your retailer. It's golf so real, you'll rush out and buy a cart.



Topographic contours reflect even the smallest green wrinkle. If you misread them, watch out for the bogey man.



Trade shots with 60 top pros like Tommy Armour III, Mark McCumber, Mark O'Meara, Fred Couples, Fuzzy Zoeller, and Craig Stadler. Ignore their advice and you could have a stroke.



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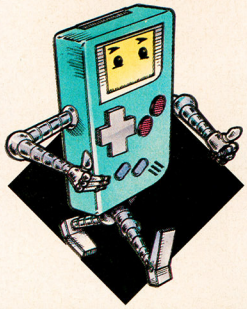


GAME BOY PLAYERS

NEW STUFF AT CES

Lance Elko
Phill Powell
Tom R. Halfhill

Do you like to play head-to-head against someone by hooking two Game Boys together with a Game Link cable? Wouldn't it be great if you could connect *three or four* Game Boys? How about *ten or more*?

You don't have long to wait. Thanks to some new accessories — and tons of new titles — gaming on the go is about to get a lot more fun.

We've recently returned from the Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, where Nintendo and dozens of other companies were showing off the new products they'll introduce over the next several months. There's really *too much* news to cover in one issue, so watch future issues of *Game Player's* for updates and full reviews.

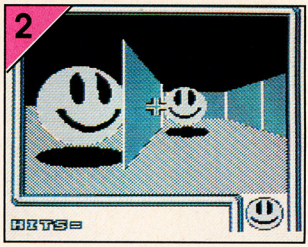
Two of the most exciting products we saw for the Game Boy were the new multiplayer devices.

1 Nintendo's new Four-Player Adapter doubles the number of Game Boys that can be hooked together for multiplayer games.

2 Bullet-Proof Software's *Face Ball 2000* will work with a new multiplayer adapter that allows ten or more Game Boys to be networked.

Nintendo's own Four-Player Adapter doubles the number of Game Boys you can network together with Game Link cables. Of course, it'll work only with games specially designed to handle extra players, so Nintendo simultaneously announced the first four-player Game Boy title: *F-1 Race*. This fast-action game lets you steer nitro-burning Formula 1 cars on 12 different racetracks. *F-1 Race* is packaged with the Four-Player Adapter for $29.95.

An independent company, Bullet-Proof Software, is going even further. Bullet-Proof showed us a prototype adapter that allows *at least ten* Game Boys to be hooked together! To take advantage of this adapter, Bullet-Proof is working on a wild multiplayer game called *Face Ball 2000*. It's based on an Atari ST computer game from Xanth Software called *MIDI-Maze*. Each player controls a ball-shaped happy-face character within a maze. Since your view of the maze is limited to a first-person perspective, you can't see over the walls or around corners — but you *can* see other players when they appear in the same corridor. The object is to eliminate other players by shooting them before they shoot you. The last survivor is the winner.



Face Ball 2000 and Bullet-Proof's multiplayer adapter are scheduled for release this fall. The game also works with Nintendo's Four-Player Adapter.

Another new Game Boy title from Bullet-Proof is *Hatris*, a fast-action strategy game. *Hatris* was designed by Soviet programmer Alexey Pajitnov, the creator of *Tetris*, and his partner, Vladimir Pokhilko. Watch for it soon.

Crystal Quest, a popular game for the Macintosh computer, is coming out for the Game Boy from Data East. The goal is simple: Collect scattered space crystals while avoiding deadly mines. The challenge, though, is in the race against the clock. The more you play, the harder it gets. The original Mac game was addictive, and this Game

Jamie Bunker
Professional Gamer

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When Jamie says Gaiares really smokes, we believe him. That's because Jamie's been a professional video game tester since he was twelve. And when we introduced Jamie to the eight meg power and 3 way scrolling graphics of Gaiares, he was blown away.

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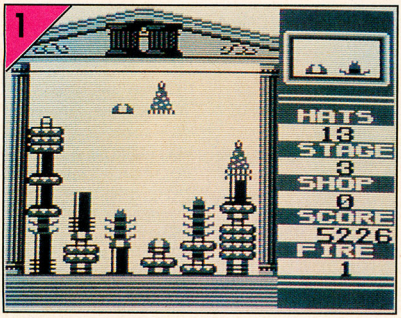
GAME BOY PLAYERS

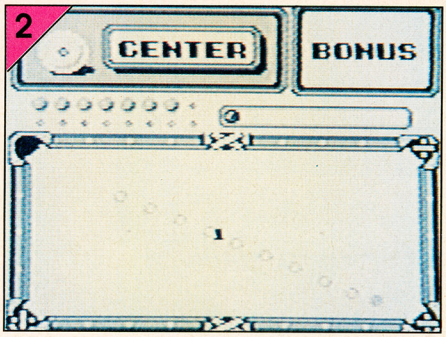
Boy version appears almost identical in play. *Crystal Quest* is expected to be available this summer.

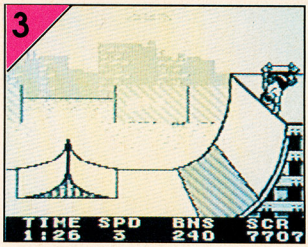
Two other Game Boy titles were announced by Data East: *Burgertime Deluxe* and *Side Pocket*. If you've played either the NES or arcade versions of *Burgertime*, you'll have a head start with *Burgertime Deluxe*. You play hamburger chef Peter Pepper, who must frantically search for all the parts to build as many burgers as possible before time runs out. *Side Pocket* is a pool game that really does fit into a side pocket (of your jacket, that is). You can shoot either 9-Ball or Pocket Play matches. Both *Burgertime Deluxe* and *Side Pocket* are expected to be available by the time you read this.



Ultima: Runes of Virtue is the first Game Boy title adapted from the hugely popular Ultima series for computers. But this version from FCI isn't a translation of any of the six computer games — it was developed exclusively for the Game Boy by the original designers. A long-playing and deep adventure, *Ultima: Runes of Virtue* is filled with action, monsters, and treasures. As either a mage, bard, fighter, or ranger, your mission is to explore dungeons and search the land of Britannia to find eight hidden runes. There's a one-player mode with more than 150 levels, and an 80-level two-player mode in which you can either compete against a friend or work together to find the runes. The one-megabit cartridge includes a battery backup for saving game positions. It's scheduled to be released in May.

NTVIC, a new Game Boy publisher, announced two action titles: *Power Mission* and *Fastest Lap*. The first game looks like it might have been modeled after events in the Persian Gulf. You can select from one of seven naval-and-air fleets and use radar to track and destroy enemies. It's designed for one or two players and should be available now. *Fastest Lap* is a Formula 1 racing game that features 16 tracks on the international circuit. It's also designed for one or two players and should be released in May.





Two new titles from Hudson Soft, *Atomic Punk* and *Triumph*, are due out late this summer. *Atomic Punk* is a high-energy, post-holocaust action game in which you travel through eight nuked cities to find an escape route. You must cope with such hazards as exploding birds, bombs, and wind storms. *Triumph* is a different kind of game. Set in a medieval fantasy world, it has elements of both chess and role-playing, and it features some pointed satire. You set forth on a quest to conquer a kingdom of demons, and along the way you battle noblemen, monks, mummies, spiders, skeletons, snakes, and jesters.

1 Bullet-Proof's *Hatris* is another fast-action puzzle game from the Soviet creator of *Tetris*.

2 Data East's *Side Pocket* puts a pool hall in your Game Boy with features like this bonus round.

3 Electronic Arts' *Skate or Die: Tour de Thrash* lets you compete all over the world or practice your trick moves on a ramp.

Ocean is bringing a big-screen hero to the Game Boy: *RoboCop*. It closely follows the story of the first *RoboCop* movie and the arcade game. As a cybernetic policeman, you patrol the streets of Detroit, shooting it out with crooks while trying to unravel the sinister plans of the evil O.C.P. Corporation.

The second *Skate or Die* game for

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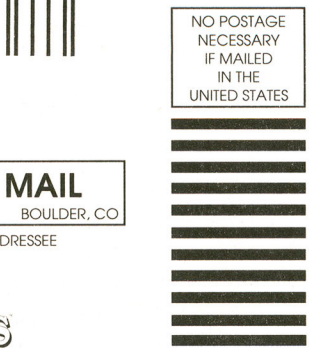

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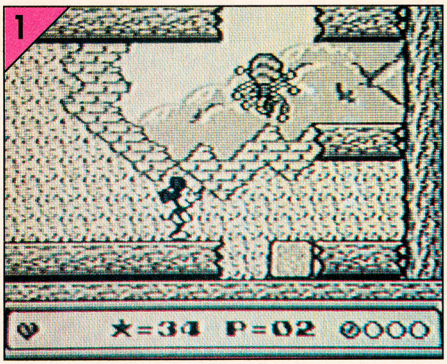
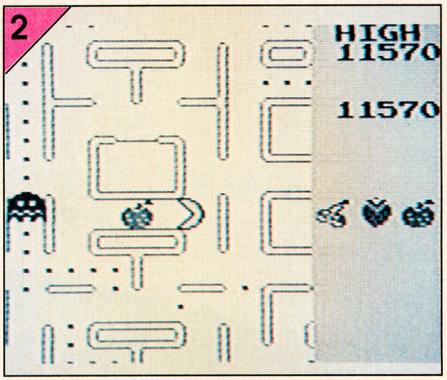
GAME BOY PLAYERS

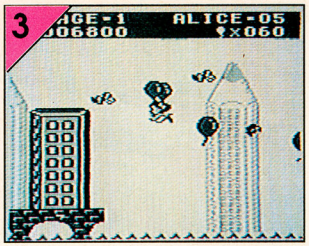
1. Now you can help out America's favorite mice in *Mickey's Dangerous Chase* from Capcom.
2. *Pac-Man* returns to form in this new Game Boy version from Namco.
3. She flies through the air with the greatest of ease: Alice, the heroine of Nintendo's *Balloon Kid*, journeys through Pencilvania.
4. In Electro-Brain's *Go! Go! Tank*, you fly a small airplane and clear a path for your tank-driving buddy.

the Game Boy will be rolling into stores shortly. Electronic Arts' *Skate or Die: Tour de Thrash* lets you join a skateboard tournament held in 12 cities all over the globe. You can also practice your stunts in a ramp-riding mode.

Cartoon favorite Mickey Mouse will star in *Mickey's Dangerous Chase* from Capcom. Among the dangers are tarantulas, bulldogs, and a menacing rodent







known as Big Bad Pete. Mickey and Minnie Mouse must contend with these hazards while moving through five stages of scrolling action.

Another popular character coming to the Game Boy is the gobbling yellow fellow in *Pac-Man*. In a version closely modeled after the original arcade hit, Namco's *Pac-Man* features all the familiar mazes and relentless pursuers that have made this chase game a modern classic. A two-player option lets you compete against a friend.

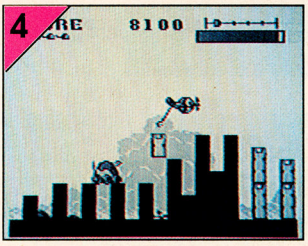
Nintendo's *Balloon Kid* introduces another lighthearted adventure with cute and charming characters. Instead of punishing enemies, you travel by balloon through a whimsical world. As Alice, the game's heroine, you're out to rescue Jim, your little brother. You travel by grabbing balloons and floating along, steering to avoid dangerous obstacles.

Balloon Kid has three different variations, including a two-player mode using a Game Link cable. It's a safe bet that younger players will be drawn to *Balloon Kid*'s gentle fun. Older gamers may find themselves interested, too.

Electro-Brain's *Go! Go! Tank* also has the look and feel of a game designed especially for younger players. You pilot a small, cartoonish airplane that's clearing a path for its companion tank on the ground. To help the tank, you must snag blocks and drop them to fill gaps in the land.

Like *Balloon Kid*, *Go! Go! Tank* lets two players enjoy its puzzle action. In the two-player mode, one person pilots the plane while the other drives the tank. In this variation, however, the two players work *against* each other while moving through the game's five areas.

GP



If you've ever wondered how you'd fare as a grizzled gunslinger in the Old West, then mosey on down to your local video arcade and take a crack at *Mad Dog McCree*, Betson's new live-action laserdisc game.

Mad Dog McCree isn't just another videogame. The graphics are full-motion, digitized images stored on a video laserdisc player. Unlike *Dragon's Lair*, the first laserdisc game to hit the arcades (in the early 1980s), *Mad Dog McCree* uses video footage of real actors, not cartoons.

And unlike *Dragon's Lair*, you're not armed with a wimpy little joystick and a fire button. No, sir. *Mad Dog McCree* sets you up proper with a full-sized six-shooter. (No bullets, though — the gun fires an invisible beam of light at the screen.) As you stand about four feet in front of a monstrous 50-inch Pioneer projection TV, all sorts of evil, mean, nasty varmints try to blow daylight through your new gunslinger duds.

The plot is simple: Mad Dog and his gang have taken over the town, locked the sheriff in his own jail, and taken the mayor and his daughter hostage. As usual, you are the only ray of hope.

Start off with some target practice, blasting bottles off a fence. Then, as you ride into town (population 65), the Old Prospector comes running up to give you the lowdown. Before he gets a chance to finish, a couple of greasy sidewinders try to plug him. If you don't beat them both to the draw, the old guy will croak without giving you some important clues.

We advise heading to the saloon first, where the McCree boys with the jail keys are drinking. The bartender will call you aside to warn you of imminent danger. One-Eyed Jack will taunt you before ordering one of the boys to blast the barkeep. You'll have to gun down all five bad guys to get the keys and keep the bartender alive.

Next, go to the sheriff's office, where you'll have to shoot a McCree guard through the door. The sheriff will thank you and let himself out of the cell to help you finish off the gang.

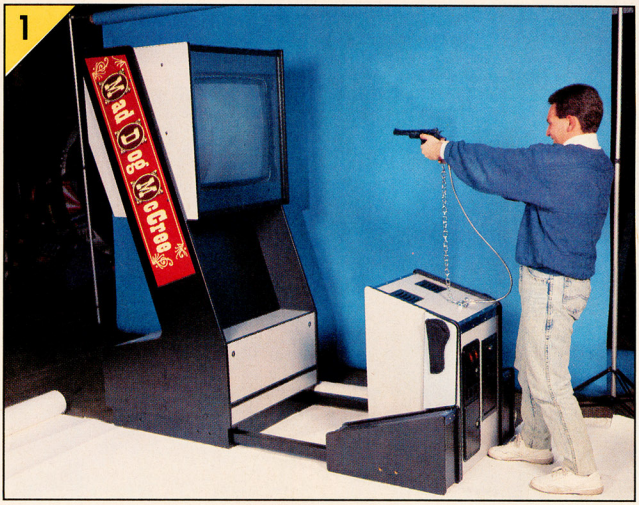
Mad Dog McCree is filled with humorously cliched Western characters. For example, there's an undertaker who gives you sardonic advice each time you die — while cleaning his fingernails with a curious little knife. He also adjusts the town's population sign if you accidentally shoot a citizen: "Population: Sixty-*four*."

In other scenes, you'll have to thwart a bank robbery, take part in a shootout at a corral, carefully shoot the fuse off a load of dynamite strapped to the Old Prospector, retrieve the hideout map from a booby-trapped mine, run the gauntlet to the hideout, and mow

ARCADE ACTION

Mad Dog McCree

Scott Wolf



1 *Mad Dog McCree* lets you strap on a six-shooter and become a gunfighter in the Old West.

ARCADE ACTION

1 This is an actual scene from *Mad Dog McCree*. Instead of computer graphics, the game uses video footage of real actors stored on a video laserdisc player and played back on a 50-inch projection TV.

2 The McCree gang has taken over the town, locked the sheriff in jail, and kidnapped the mayor and his daughter. To beat the McCrees, you'd better be fast on the draw!

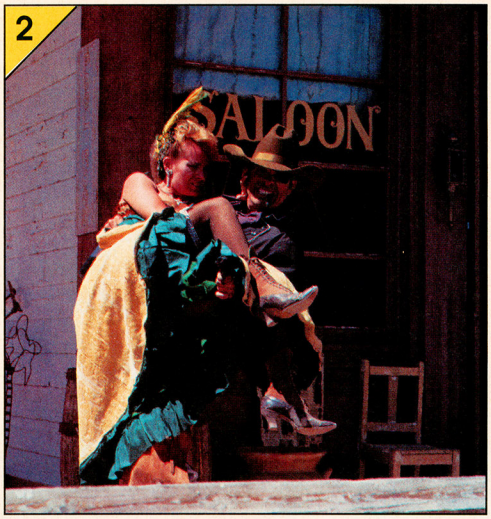
down the outlaws as they bolt from their cabin (hopefully without hitting the mayor, who runs out amongst them).

Although *Mad Dog McCree* is set in the Old West, the pistol attached to the game is a modified Daisy pellet gun modeled not after an authentic Colt Peacemaker, but rather a modern, double-action .357 magnum. This is no thumb-buster — it'll shoot as fast as you can pull the trigger, and it roars like Sonny Crockett's 10mm Bren on *Miami Vice*. In recognition of the gun's all-too-real appearance, Betson equips some machines with a bright-orange version of the piece.

Here are a few tips that should help keep you alive:

You can't just shoot anyone you want to anytime you like, even when you know they're up to no good. Like any good lawman who knows his Supreme Court cases, you must wait for the bad guys to make the first move. Otherwise, the screen will just flash when you pull the trigger, and you'll find yourself back at the undertaker's.

The screen displays your remaining lives, your score, and how many bullets are left in your gun. You're supposed to holster the gun to reload it, but a quick downward snap of the barrel will achieve the same result in a fraction of the time.



Throughout the game, you'll see cattle skulls and spittoons. Shooting them will increase the number of bullets in your gun. You can actually pack 12 shots in the ol' six-shooter!

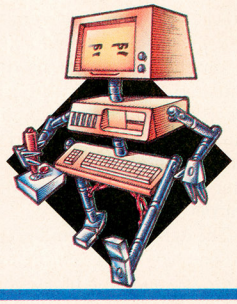
Listen carefully to the advice of the townsfolk. For instance, one time you may be advised not to approach the hideout from the rear; next time, they'll say not to approach it from the front.

Betson says a new scenario will be available for the machine every six months or so. A 1930s Chicago storyline with gangsters is currently in production.

Mad Dog McCree may raise objections from people who consider it too violent. However, there is never any bloodshed on the screen, and the stuntwork is very professional.

Besides, in the immortal words of Dirty Harry Callahan, "There's nothing wrong with shooting — as long as the right people get shot."

GP



PC PLAYERS

PC Games at Winter CES

William R. Trotter

At the previous Consumer Electronics Show (Chicago, June 1990), a palpable sense of gloom hung over the PC section. Sales of home computers had leveled off; some once-vigorous software companies seemed precarious; other companies — with attitudes that were decidedly mixed — had bowed to the inevitable and made pacts with the Nintendo juggernaut to produce the cartridge-based videogames they once scorned; and 16-bit videogame machines, offering computer-quality graphics at a fraction of computer prices, were on the rise. Could it be that computer games were doomed?

On the basis of what we saw and heard at Winter CES (Las Vegas, January 10-13), the answer is an emphatic *No!* During the last six months, a number of things happened. Software companies got their collective act together and did some aggressive, high-profile marketing; IBM, Apple, and Tandy introduced popular new computers aimed specifically at home users; and some of the newest computer games were obviously so much better than anything available for videogame machines that a lot of people suddenly found their passion for PC entertainment rekindled.

1 *Falcon 3.0* is the latest version of Spectrum HoloByte's F-16 flight-combat simulator.

2 *Gunship 2000* is the sequel to MicroProse's popular attack-chopper simulator.

Now the consensus is that the computer game market was never as moribund as it had appeared. PC software sales have shown healthy growth for the last two quarters, and the winnowing-out process has trimmed a lot of deadwood.

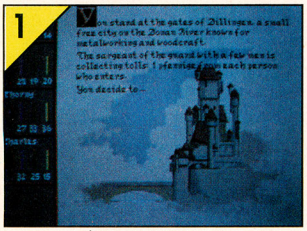
There were still some me-too games on display in Vegas, but nobody was paying much attention to them — not after viewing such stunning products as *Falcon 3.0*, *Gunship 2000*, *Space Shuttle*, *Castles*, and *Wing Commander II*. In fact, we saw very, very few poor games at Winter CES. And even though the total number of games exhibited was smaller than at either of the 1990 trade shows, the overall quality — in terms of graphics, sound, and concept — was extraordinarily high.

Simulations, for instance, just keep getting better and better. Spectrum HoloByte's *Falcon 3.0* incorporates everything that veteran company has learned in two and a half years of designing air-combat simulators for the air force. The animation is creamy smooth. The flight dynamics are utterly convincing (the sensation of hurtling through Mideastern airspace on blazing afterburners is particularly exciting). And the combat sequences are intense (including great bit-mapped explosions!).

PC PLAYERS

Falcon 3.0 should be available by the time you read this.

Another upgraded simulator was MicroProse's *Gunship 2000*. Aside from its brilliant graphics and realistic sound, this version improves on the original by allowing you to control as many as five attack choppers in a single operation, not unlike the armored combat in MicroProse's *Tank Platoon*. Watch for *Gunship 2000* late this spring.


1
We stand at the gates of Dillingen, a small free city on the Doman River known for metalworking and woodcraft.
The sergeant of the guard with a few men is collecting tolls: 1 pfennig from each person who enters.
You decide to—

In a dramatic departure from its normal line of combat simulators, MicroProse also showed a preview of *Darklands*, its first role-playing adventure. The setting is medieval Germany, and the ambiance is definitely Wagnerian. The narrative screens are done in a most distinctive style, reminiscent of the late-19th-century book illustrations of N.C. Wyeth and Arthur Rackham.

Virgin Mastertronic unveiled *Space Shuttle*, currently in its final stages of development by Britain's Vektor Graphics. *Space Shuttle* promises to be the Mount Everest of flight simulators. A six-foot shelf of NASA manuals has been crunched into this program, and *every single switch, readout, and button* on the real space shuttle is simulated. You can fly a mission in real time, controlling everything yourself (a project that could take weeks), or you can let the computer take over some or all of the controls.

The detail, scope, and graphic virtuosity of *Space Shuttle* awed every GAME PLAYER'S editor who saw it. This program is clearly the most powerful and complex flight simulator ever designed. It won't be everyone's cup of tea, but it certainly defines new boundaries for the genre.

Strategy games were few at this show, but two were real standouts. Interplay's *Castles* taps into a universal childhood pastime: that of building a fort, sculpting a sand castle, or piling up Lincoln Logs. In *Castles*, you design the medieval fortress of your dreams — right down to the cauldrons full of boiling oil you'll pour down on your enemies. Then you get to defend your castle against assaulting hordes. The animated castle-building sequences (historically authentic, by the way) are delightful, and the sieges are surprisingly detailed. *Castles* is scheduled for release late this spring.

2
With the support of the Holy Church, and the Dukes of the three great houses, Warfield, Westhampton, and Yorshire, the King raised taxes to

Perhaps the oddest strategy game exhibited was *Solidarity* from California Dreams. Developed by Polish programmers, this unique game lets you step into the role of an underground labor organizer in pre-*glasnost* Poland. You must raise funds, organize demonstrations and media campaigns, recruit new leaders, avoid getting your head cracked by the security police, and eventually emerge as a major political force in a newly free nation. How much *fun* this game will be to play is open to question, but its educational value seems high, and it certainly is different.

1 *Darklands* is the first fantasy role-playing game from MicroProse.

2 *Castles*, from Interplay, lets you build your own medieval fortress.

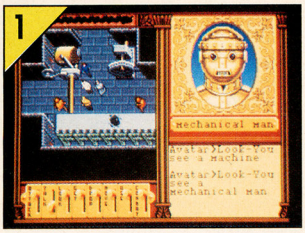
3 *Wing Commander II* is a follow-up to Origin's award-winning space-combat game.

Wing Commander addicts will be happy to learn that Origin's sequel is likely to be available by early summer. This isn't another Secret Missions module, mind you, but a whole new saga. It will include new-model spaceships (including one that has a tail gunner) and speaking voices for the Kilrathi enemy (if your PC has enough memory to handle that feature).

Origin also showed tantalizing peeks at its second Worlds of Ultima role-playing game, *Martian Dreams*. It's a Jules Verne-type saga with a charming late-Victorian style and the same lively sense of wit and adventure that made *Savage Empire* so much fun.

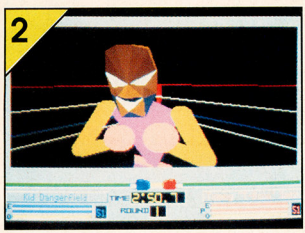
Another sequel on the way is

PC PLAYERS

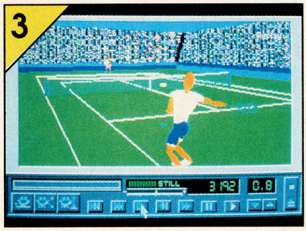


Mindcraft's *The Magic Candle 2: The Four and Forty*, a follow-up to one of the most lovable fantasy role-playing games ever developed. This version has greatly improved graphics and an automatic note-taking feature that records every name, place, or fact mentioned during conversations with the game's characters. This feature will save a great deal of tedious scribbling, but you can switch it off if you prefer to take your own notes.

Also scheduled for late-spring release is Mindcraft's *Rules of Engagement*, a huge, strategic-level space-combat game that creates unique personalities for its various characters. Using the new Interlocking Game System developed by Omnitrend, *Rules of Engagement* interfaces with Mindcraft's *Breach 2*, so players can shift between strategic and tactical combat.



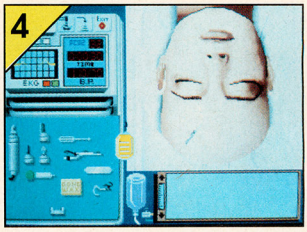
Sports fans may see a slower tempo of new releases in 1991, simply because the genre has become almost as crowded as the dungeons-and-dragons field. MicroLeague Sports, a company whose statistics-intensive games have earned a high reputation for thoroughness and finesse, showed improved, better-looking versions of its classic baseball and football simulations. MicroLeague also displayed a new interactive golf program, *Personal Pro*, that customizes itself to each player's individual needs.



Two fascinating new sports games from Broderbund are *Sports Simulated: Tennis* and *Sports Simulated: Boxing*. These two games take the filled-polygon graphics found in many flight simulators and apply them, for the first time, to human figures. At first glance, the stylized, triangle-faced bodies are disconcerting — when a boxer launches a jab, he looks rather like Plastic Man slugging a criminal. But that initial reaction is quickly supplanted by amazement at the fluid realism of muscle movement, and the charm and dynamism of the athletes' personal styles. The more we watched, the more we liked the freshness and creativity of Broderbund's new approach.

Puzzle game fans should keep their eyes open for Data East's *Continuum*, a French-designed game in which you bounce from shape to shape through various levels of a vast, geometrically weird environment. There's a dazzling Escher-like quality to the graphics, and the shapes and colors are close to psychedelic.

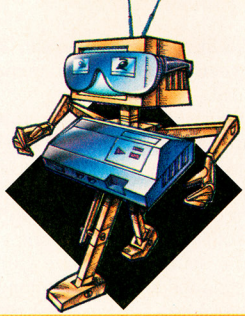
1. *Martian Dreams* is the second installment in Origin's Worlds of Ultima series.
2. *Sports Simulated: Boxing* from Broderbund is the first game to use filled-polygon graphics for human figures.
3. *Sports Simulated: Tennis* is another Broderbund game that uses filled-polygon graphics to recreate human movement.
4. *Life & Death II: The Brain* lets you diagnose and operate on various brain maladies.



Surgery fans (come on, we know you're out there!) will be delighted to know that The Software Toolworks is bringing out *Life & Death II: The Brain*, a full-color brain-surgery sequel to the cut-and-stitch original.

There were numerous other games we don't have room to mention here, but we'll be covering many of them in future issues. Overall, we came away from this CES with renewed faith in the solidity of computer gaming. Computer games are easier to play and much better-looking than they were even two years ago, and they continue to offer a first-rate entertainment experience.

GP



SEGA PLAYERS

Game Gear Debuts in U.S.

Matthew A. Firme

Sega's exhibit at the recent Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas was a very busy place this year. While many people felt that the overall turnout at the show was below average, you'd never have guessed it from the Sega booth.

As expected, Sega officially introduced the hand-held Game Gear to the U.S. market and displayed many new games. There were also a few surprises — such as a plug-in stereo speaker system for the Genesis (still not officially announced). But Sega *did not* show its long-awaited CD drive or telephone modem. Most of the excitement centered on the Game Gear and the new Genesis titles. Rows of monitors and Genesis machines were set up, and in most cases there were lines of people waiting to play the games.

The Game Gear

As we predicted in the January issue of *Game Player's*, Sega decided to officially debut its new hand-held videogame system at Winter CES. The Game Gear has been on sale in Japan since early October, and will be released in a few test markets in the U.S. this spring. Sega says the machine should be available in larger numbers nationwide sometime this summer.

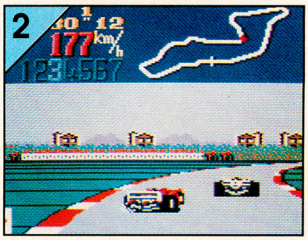
The Japanese debut of the Game Gear was very successful. Sega reports sales of more than 40,000 units in the first two days alone. Within 30 days of its release, the entire initial supply of 90,000 units had been sold, and back orders for additional systems exceeded 600,000.

But how will it do in the U.S.? Tom Kalinske, president and chief executive officer of Sega of America, has great expectations. Kalinske predicts the Game Gear will sell even better in the U.S. than in Japan. In fact, he's confident that Sega will take the lead in the American hand-held market — a bold prophecy, considering that Nintendo has already sold more than five million Game Boys in the U.S. alone. But Sega points to marketing research which indicates that game players prefer the Game Gear's color graphics over the Game Boy's black-and-white screen.

"There is clearly a need for a quality portable system that provides features other systems have failed to deliver," says Robert Botch, Sega's marketing director for the Game Gear. "This means easy-to-view, full-color graphics and exciting quality games that appeal to all ages."

Exciting games and wide-ranging appeal were both in evidence at Winter CES. One title in particular, *Shinobi*, showed remarkable detail for a hand-held game. The martial-arts character Shinobi looked more like he does in *Revenge of Shinobi* for the Genesis than he does in the original eight-bit Sega Master System game. At CES, people of all ages waited in line to play *Shinobi* and other Game Gear titles, such as *G-LOC* (an arcade translation), *Columns* (which comes with the Game Gear), and *Super Monaco GP* (adapted from a Master System and Genesis car-racing game).

Nevertheless, to become the hand-held leader, Sega will not only have to contend with the Game Boy — currently the best-selling portable in both the U.S. and Japan — but also with Atari's new $99



1 The Game Gear is roughly the same size as the new, scaled-down Atari Lynx. Unlike the Lynx, though, the Game Gear has an optional TV tuner.

2 *Super Monaco GP* on the Game Gear compares more closely to the Sega Master System version than the Genesis version.

Lynx. (See "Atari Safari" on page 48.) At $159.95, the Game Gear is priced significantly higher than the new Lynx and is comparable in terms of features.

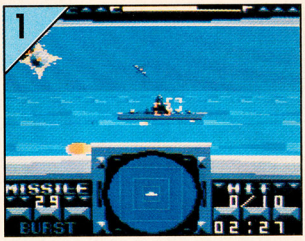
The American version of the Game Gear will be virtually identical to the Japanese version described in the January issue of *Game Player's*. Horizontal in design, it measures 7 inches wide, 3.5 inches tall, and 1.25 inches deep. It requires its own special game cartridges (about the size of a credit card) and is not compatible with Genesis or Master System games.

Centered on the Game Gear's top panel is a 3.25-inch liquid crystal display (LCD) screen which can show as many as 32 colors at a time out of a possible 4,096. The LCD is backlit, which means it can be viewed in any lighting, even complete darkness. By comparison, Nintendo's Game Boy has a 2.5-inch black-and-white LCD which is not backlit; Atari's Lynx has a 3.5-inch backlit color LCD; and NEC's TurboExpress has a 2.6-inch color LCD that uses active-matrix technology, which is superior to (but more expensive than) either the Game Gear or the Lynx.

To the left of the Game Gear's screen is a standard directional pad. On the right are three control buttons labeled 1, 2, and Start. At the lower left is a tiny speaker. On top is an on-off switch, a volume control, a stereo headphone jack, an auxiliary input jack, and an AC power connector. The Game Gear requires six AA batteries, which last three or four hours.

The auxiliary input jack lets you hook up an optional VHF/UHF tuner or a video camcorder, which allows the Game Gear to function as either a TV or a portable video monitor. The TV tuner is scheduled to be available in the U.S. this fall. Although no price has been announced, it'll probably retail for under $100.

Other features include true stereo sound and competitive play through an optional cable that links two Game Gears together. Future accessories will include an AC power adapter, a 12-volt cigarette lighter adapter, and a rechargeable battery pack.

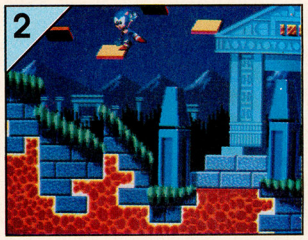


Sonic the Hedgehog

Although nearly all of the new games at Winter CES sparked interest, the one people seemed to talk about the most was *Sonic the Hedgehog*. The star of this Genesis game, Sonic, is a dizzyingly fast blue hedgehog. He looks cocky — and with his speed, it's no wonder. He can run so fast that the backgrounds seem to blur, a truly remarkable effect. The scenes scroll by so fast that you almost feel woozy as you watch.

Sonic the Hedgehog has more going for it than pure rapidity. The graphics are excellent, as good as many games for the Amiga personal computer. And there's a sense of good-spirited mischief in Sonic's expressions and manner that make him instantly likeable. He's destined to become the Roadrunner of the 1990s.

Despite the complexity of the graphics, the speed of the scrolling, and the many items and characters scattered throughout the game, the *Hedgehog* cart we saw at Winter CES was only about half finished. What more could there be? Well, how about secret rooms, "Easter eggs," and hidden items! Secrets like these will be a big part of the game, and they should help



insure that *Sonic the Hedgehog* becomes one of Sega's best-selling new titles.

Two other Genesis games were also noteworthy, both long-awaited sequels. And both were very impressive.

In *Phantasy Star 3*, you'll return to the fabulous Algol system — and explore beyond it. This promises to be the most detailed role-playing game ever released for a home videogame system.

And Joe Musashi returns in *Shadow Dancer: The Secret of Shinobi*. This time, Musashi is accompanied by Yamato, his loyal dog. The action is nonstop and the graphics are terrific.

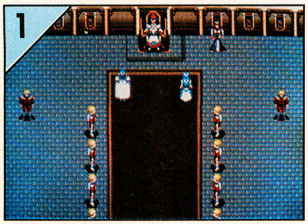
Another Genesis game we can't wait to play is *Alien Storm*. Only a

1 *G-LOC* is a thrilling jet fighter game adapted for the Game Gear from an arcade hit.

2 The fast, cocky *Sonic the Hedgehog* is one of Sega's best new games for the Genesis.

demo was running at the show, but the graphics were enough to sell us on this one. You move through Anytown, USA, running into neighbors as you go. But any one of them might suddenly explode into an alien monster. You don't know whom to trust. All you can do is be ready, and suspect everyone.

Finally, how would you like a maze game that's different each time you play? Watch for *Fatal Labyrinth* — the mazes change, and so do the functions of various items and magic spells, so the game is always fresh.



Independent Software

Not all of the excitement at Winter CES was generated by Sega of America. Independent companies occupied a large area in Sega's booth and were showing dozens of new Genesis games.

Accolade is working on a Genesis version of the futuristic computer game *Star Control*. Based on the preliminary version we saw, this should be a very detailed and very exciting game — a combination of role-playing, military strategy, and arcade action.

Taito is planning to release three new Genesis titles: *Saigaia*, a scrolling shooter; *Space Invaders '91*, a revamped version of an old classic; and *Rastan Saga II*.

RazorSoft, whose violent *TechnoCop* has caused much controversy, is back with *StormLord*, a side-scrolling adventure. This time the question is whether or not the female figures in the game are nude. RazorSoft's position is that the Genesis audience is older and more mature, and the company plans to put a voluntary warning label on the package, as was done with *TechnoCop*. However, Sega of America wouldn't allow the risque version of *StormLord* to remain on display at Winter CES. Sega says an alternate version, which *was* allowed to remain on display, will be released instead. In this version, the women are unquestionably clothed. RazorSoft still hopes to release the original version.

Data East, whose Genesis titles were reported in last month's issue, hadn't yet worked out the details of its licensing agreement with Sega in time for CES, and therefore wasn't displaying any games at the show. However, Data East plans to proceed with *Crystal Quest*, a race game set in space, and *Midnight Resistance*, based on an arcade game, as soon as the agreement is finalized. At least for now, *Vapor Trail* has been put on hold. Data East plans to release more Genesis titles throughout the year.

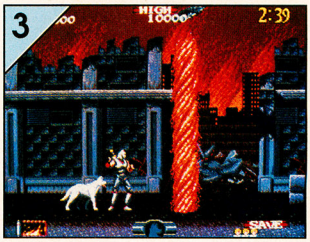
Tengen will release Genesis versions of the popular arcade games *Pit Fighter* and *Pac-Mania*, plus *R.B.I. Baseball III*. *Pit Fighter* is notable as the first Genesis game to use entirely digitized characters, giving the game a unique realistic look.

Mentrix, a new Sega licensee, announced its first Genesis title: *Wardener*, which is based on the arcade game *Pyros*.

Nuvision is working on *Swamp Thing*, based on the DC Comics superhero.

Micronet/Bignet USA is planning to release three Genesis titles in 1991: *Junction*, a fast-moving puzzle game; *Raiden*, a shoot-em-up; and *Warrior of Rome*, a military strategy game.

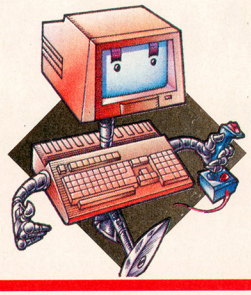
GP



1 *Phantasy Star 3* promises to be the biggest, most detailed role-playing game yet released for the Genesis.

2 Each time you enter the *Fatal Labyrinth*, you'll find a new challenge. The mazes in this Genesis game are different every time you play.

3 This time accompanied by his fierce but loyal dog Yamato, Shinobi returns for his third adventure in *Shadow Dancer: The Secret of Shinobi* for the Genesis.



AMIGA PLAYERS

CDTV Is Here!

Sheldon Leemon

American consumers seem to have an almost endless appetite for new electronic gadgets — from VCRs and video laserdisc players to music CDs and DAT recorders. With this in mind, Commodore recently launched CDTV, a product that Commodore hopes will create a whole new category in home entertainment.

The prototype version of CDTV (Commodore Dynamic Total Vision) was covered in the August 1990 issue of *Game Player's*. Since then, Commodore has changed a few details, but the system largely remains the same. The retail price has been set at $999.

On the inside, CDTV is almost identical to a one-megabyte Amiga 500. On the outside, however, CDTV looks nothing like a personal computer — one of Commodore's primary design goals. It has no keyboard, mouse, or floppy disk drive. Instead, CDTV is housed in a black case that closely resembles a front-loading VCR. The sleek unit is designed to be stackable and to fit unobtrusively into a home entertainment center. Commodore wants you to put CDTV in your living room, not in your home office.

Instead of the 3.5-inch floppy disk drive found on regular Amigas, CDTV has a front-loading CD-ROM (compact disc read-only memory) player. This player accepts three kinds of five-inch compact discs: special CDTV software, ordinary music CDs, and the CD+G (compact disc+graphics) format, which adds still video to the audio portion of a music CD.

Instead of a keyboard and a mouse, CDTV has a wireless remote control. Its numeric keypad, four-way directional pad, and A and B buttons make it look like a cross between a Nintendo controller and a TV/VCR remote. And in fact, that's what it is — an all-in-one substitute for a typewriter keyboard, mouse, and joystick.

Only the back of the CDTV unit looks anything like an Amiga 500. It has the familiar RGB video output, composite video output, keyboard interface, mouse port, parallel printer port, RS-232 serial port, and external floppy disk drive port. In addition, CDTV has an S-video output (for Super VHS and Hi-8), RF video output for TV, and ports for MIDI IN and MIDI OUT. (MIDI stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface, the industry standard for keyboards and other devices.)

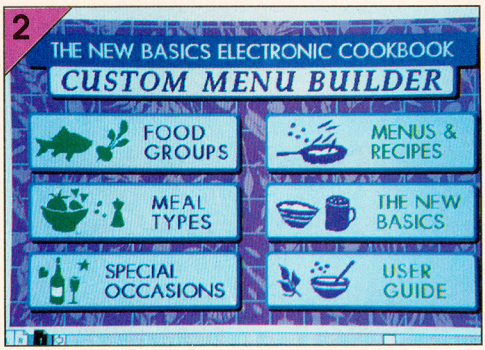
On the front of the unit is a stereo headphone jack, a standard Amiga cartridge slot, volume controls, and various buttons for the CD player.

Inside the box are all the chips normally found in an Amiga 500, plus a pair of video and DMA slots for future expansion. By plugging in an optional keyboard, mouse, and floppy disk drive, you can turn CDTV back into a full-fledged Amiga 500. By adding an external expansion box, you could attach a hard disk drive, more memory, and other devices.

Commodore describes CDTV

1 Commodore's CDTV looks like a VCR, not a computer.

2 The *New Basics Electronic Cookbook* from Xiphias.



AMIGA PLAYERS

as an "interactive multimedia player," a marriage between computer CD-ROM technology and television. TV presents us with high-impact visuals and sound, but it's not interactive — we can only sit and watch. Computers and videogames let us participate, but their storylines are limited and their images and sounds aren't as lifelike as those on TV. Commodore hopes that by combining high-quality graphics and CD-quality audio with the interactivity of computers and the mass storage (550 megabytes per disc) of CD-ROM, the result will be a new level of home entertainment.

How successful CDTV will be depends on the kind of software written for it. Commodore promises 30 titles by the time CDTV is released this spring, with 200 titles by the end of the year. Some of these, however, will be quick transfers of existing Amiga products onto CD-ROM — software that won't really do much to take advantage of CDTV's potential. Commodore's list of CDTV software includes many familiar Amiga games, such as *Thexdar*, *Excalibur*, *Space Quest III*, *Xenon II*, *Pacmania*, *Future Wars*, *Sim City*, *Falcon*, and *Defender of the Crown*. But there'll also be other applications developed especially for CDTV.

For example, at the recent Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, NEC Technologies presented a CD-ROM version of *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective*. That version is intended for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 home videogame machine with its optional TurboGrafx-CD drive. (See "Turbo Players," page 45.) But Icom Simulations, which developed *Sherlock Holmes* for NEC, is releasing a similar version for CDTV as well. It features full-motion video of live actors playing out various scenes in the drama. As detective Holmes, you hunt for clues and try to solve three different mysteries included on the disc.

CDTV applications aren't limited to games. In fact, Commodore plans to emphasize the educational potential of CDTV with such titles as *Cinderella*, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, *Scary Poems for Rotten Kids*, *A Long Hard Day at the Ranch*, *Moving Gives Me a Stomach Ache*, and *The Paper Bag Princess* from Discis; *Animated Coloring Book* from Gold Disk; *All Dogs Go to Heaven* from Merit Software; *Snoopy* from The Edge; and *North Polar Expedition* from Virgin Mastertronic.

Home-reference applications include *Gardenfax — Houseplants* from Intersearch; *King James Bible* and *Illustrated Works of Shakespeare* from Animated Pixels; *World Vista Atlas* from Applied Optical Media; *Family Medical Advisor* from Digita; *Japan World* from TopClass Tech; and *Time Table of Science & Innovation*, *Time Table of Business & Politics*, *New Basics Electronic Cookbook*, and *The American Heritage Encyclopedic Dictionary* from Xiphias.

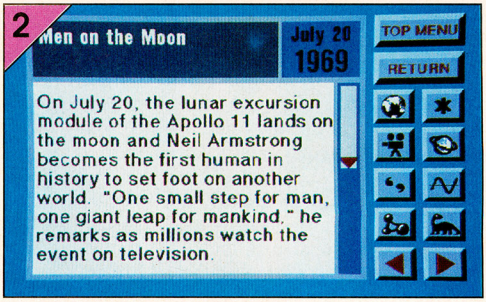
Another interesting CDTV application takes advantage of the built-in MIDI ports. Some music CDs use subcode channels to store MIDI data for the instrumental tracks on the disc. By plugging a keyboard synthesizer into the MIDI ports, you can run these instrumental tracks through the synthesizer — modifying the sounds any way you wish, and even playing along with the music!

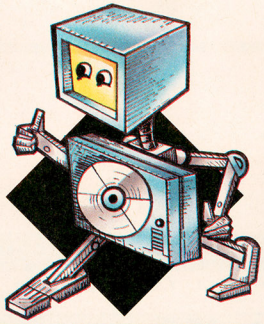
Despite the many exciting features of CDTV, Commodore faces a formidable challenge. It's difficult enough to successfully sell a product to an established market. With CDTV, Commodore must virtually *create* a new market, almost from scratch.

GP

1 The *World Vista Atlas* from Applied Optical Media can display maps for any part of the world.

2 *The Time Table of Science & Innovation* from Xiphias is an encyclopedia of scientific events.


2
Men on the Moon
July 20
1969
TOP MENU
RETURN
On July 20, the lunar excursion module of the Apollo 11 lands on the moon and Neil Armstrong becomes the first human in history to set foot on another world. "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," he remarks as millions watch the event on television.



TURBO PLAYERS

1991: Year of the CD

Jeff Lundrigan

By far the biggest news from NEC at the recent Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas was the number of new CD titles on the way. The TurboGrafx-CD player is NEC's most unique accessory, and NEC intends to exploit that uniqueness. The company says about half of the TurboGrafx-16 games it releases this year will be on CD.

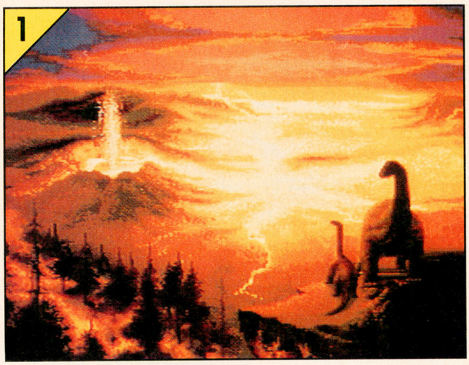
Last year, by comparison, NEC released only a handful of CD titles in the U.S., and most of them — such as *Monster Lair* and *Fighting Street* — did not differ greatly from regular cartridge games. But some of the forthcoming CD games take fuller advantage of the enormous amount of information that can be stored on a CD.

A good example is the first title in NEC's new "family" series: *Magical Dinosaur Tour*, an animated encyclopedia guided by Lo-Lo, a talking baby dinosaur. Although *Dinosaur Tour* isn't exactly a game, it does illustrate some of the more interesting capabilities of the TurboGrafx-CD.

Dinosaur Tour allows you to choose from different prehistoric time periods and select any dinosaur in which you're interested. An animated sequence then takes over, showing the chosen dinosaur in a simulation of its natural habitat.

You can also call up information about the dinosaur, view its "family tree" (chain of evolution), and locate where it once lived on a map of today's continents. There are six different parts in *Dinosaur Tour*, with information on 200 different types of prehistoric animals. *Dinosaur Tour* was designed for NEC by Victor Musical Industries, which also created *The Legendary Axe*.

Future titles in NEC's family lineup will include selections from the Discis Reading Program, a series of dramatic readings of children's stories. Developed by Discis Knowledge Research, the interactive stories help young children learn to read as they follow the text and listen to the narrator. CD-based stories for the TurboGrafx will include *Scary Poems for Rotten Kids* (scheduled to be available this summer), *Cinderella*, and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*.



1 *Magical Dinosaur Tour* is an animated dinosaur encyclopedia for the TurboGrafx-CD.

2 *JB Harold* is a CD-based, modern-day mystery adventure in which the characters really talk with digitized voices.

An example of the new-style CD games coming from NEC is *JB Harold*, a mystery adventure in four parts. In each section, you must solve a particular crime — a murder, a car theft, and so on. Taking control of the title character, you can wander around the city and, for the most part, go anywhere you want while looking for evidence. You can talk to anyone you meet and listen as the person answers back with a digitized voice.

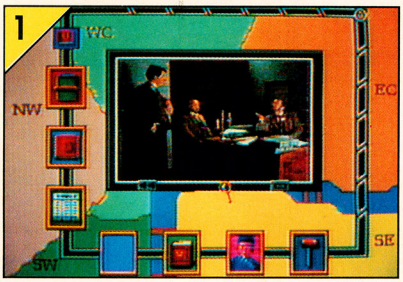
JB Harold also shows various

city scenes in digitized graphics, and the overall effect is that of participating in a mystery movie.

But perhaps the best example of things to come is *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective*. This lavish CD game was developed for NEC by ICOM Simulations, known for such graphics adventures as *Deja Vu* and *Shadowgate*. *Sherlock Holmes* is based on the popular 19th-century detective novels and includes three different murder mysteries, each with digitized speech and graphics. The difference between *Sherlock Holmes* and most other graphics adventures, however, is that it was produced much like a movie, using a cast of 35 actors, 70 specially designed costumes, 25 Victorian-era sets, and more than 80 pages of dialogue. The live elements were digitized and integrated with hand-drawn and computer-generated graphics to produce the final game.

As private detective Sherlock Holmes, you collect clues, interview witnesses, and try to deduce the identity of the murderer. Using an icon-based player interface to control the action, you can interact with the various characters, check stories in the *London Times*, consult Holmes's personal files, and even enlist the aid of his Baker Street Irregulars.

The live actors and digitized dialogue in games such as *JB Harold* and *Sherlock Holmes* really put a new spin on things. For the first time, you'll be able to actually listen to people's voices and watch the expressions on their faces while trying to figure out whether they're telling the truth.



TURBO PLAYERS

The British Invasion

More companies are signing up to design games for the TurboGrafx, and one of them is a top British publisher of computer games — Psygnosis. The first Psygnosis title to be announced for the TurboGrafx is an adaptation of the Amiga game *Shadow of the Beast*.

In this CD-based action game, you play a character who for many years has been controlled by the Beast Lord Maletoth. Through a combination of hypnosis and drugs, you've been transformed and made to serve him as a messenger, a warrior, and an executioner. But now you've awakened from your trance. To regain your lost humanity, you must fight your way past Maletoth's legions and ultimately defeat the Beast Lord himself.

Shadow of the Beast features amazingly detailed graphics and dozens of imaginative creatures. The Amiga version won the GAME PLAYER'S Award for 1990 Amiga Game of the Year, so the TurboGrafx version is worth looking forward to.

Also coming from Psygnosis is *Ballistix*, designed especially for the TurboGrafx. *Ballistix* is a fast-paced pinball game featuring numerous complex playfields on which you maneuver the ball through tunnels, magnets, splitters, and other obstacles. *Ballistix* will include all the usual Psygnosis trademarks, including sharp graphics and an original musical score.

1 *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective* uses dozens of live actors and a script more than 80 pages long. It cost more than a million dollars to produce and will be released soon on CD.

2 *TaleSpin*, developed for NEC by Radiance Software, is based on the Disney TV show.

Two other British companies, Gremlin Graphics and Hewson, are also designing games for NEC. Gremlin's *Impossamole* is the latest installment in the humorous Monty Mole series, one of the most popular series of computer games in Europe. It stars a super-powered mole who battles aliens.

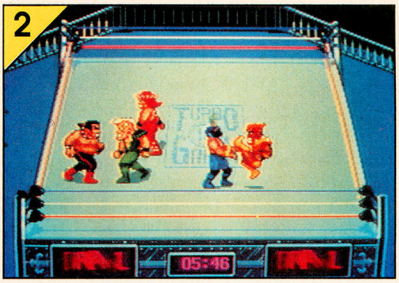
Hewson's *Paradroid 90* takes

TURBO PLAYERS

place on a multilevel space freighter. When the robot crew rebels, it's your job either to regain control of the mutinous droids or to annihilate them altogether.

Loricel, the largest software publisher in France, is also producing titles for the TurboGrafx. *Panza Kick Boxing* allows you to choose your own fighting techniques and pit your skills against eight different opponents. The game features some impressive graphics, digitized from paintings of figures in combat.

Loricel will also release a still-untitled tennis game which allows up to four players to compete simultaneously in four separate championship tournaments.

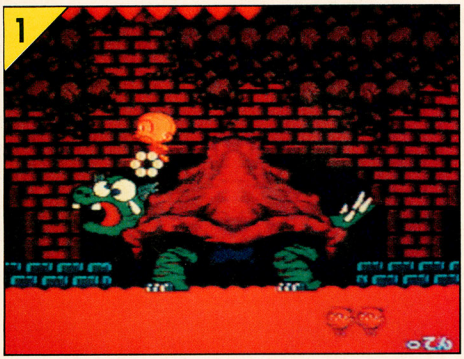


Disney's Debut

The first Disney title for the TurboGrafx is coming soon. NEC, in an agreement with Walt Disney Computer Software, will release *TaleSpin*, based on the animated Disney TV show. *TaleSpin* is being designed for NEC by Radiance Software, which did *Side Arms* for the TurboGrafx last year. A second Disney title, still to be announced, is scheduled for later in 1991.

More games on the way from various sources include *Bonk's Revenge*, *Battle Royale*, *TV Sports Basketball*, *Camp California*, and *Astralius*.

Bonk's Revenge, of course, is the sequel to NEC's top hit of 1990, *Bonk's Adventure*. In his latest adventure, Bonk the caveman can now eat a power-up that lets him breathe fire, and — like Mario in *Super Mario World* for the Super Famicom — ride a dinosaur. Watch for it in June.



Battle Royale and *TV Sports Basketball* are the latest titles to take advantage of NEC's TurboTap accessory, which allows up to five game controllers to be plugged in at once. *Battle Royale* is a wrestling game in which each player can take control of a different grappler; it should be available by the time this issue appears. In *TV Sports Basketball*, developed by Cinema-ware, five people can participate any way they want — all on the same team, or split 3-2 or 4-1 on different teams. The computer controls any on-screen ballplayers that aren't controlled by human participants. *TV Sports Basketball* is scheduled for release this June.

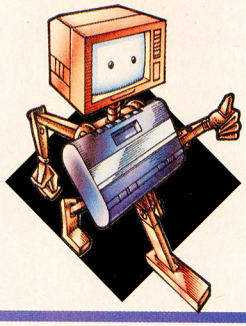
Camp California is a Beach Boys-flavored action game to be released on both cartridge and CD. The main difference between the two versions is that the CD will feature more digitized music. *Astralius* is the latest game announced by IGS, which recently produced *Sonic Spike*, *Sinistron*, and *Tricky Kick* for the TurboGrafx.

NEC also announced the TurboLink, a cable that allows two of NEC's TurboExpress hand-held systems to be hooked together for two-player games. It's slated to reach the stores in March; the price is still undetermined.

GP

1 *Bonk's Revenge*: Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the Stone Age, Bonk runs into more prehistoric trouble.

2 *Battle Royale* offers unique wrestling action, allowing up to five players to compete at once using the TurboTap accessory.



ATARI SAFARI

The New Lynx

Tom R. Halfhill

Watch out, Game Boy, Game Gear, and TurboExpress — Atari has a new Lynx for only $99!

Now that it costs only $10 more than Nintendo's black-and-white Game Boy — not to mention $60 less than Sega's Game Gear and $150 less than NEC's TurboExpress — the new Lynx is a breakthrough for its price alone. But what's even more amazing is that Atari didn't subtract any important features. The new Lynx still has the largest screen of any hand-held game system and is fully compatible with all Lynx games.

The first thing you'll notice about the new Lynx is its smaller size. The two main criticisms leveled at the original model were its relatively high price ($179) and wide girth (11 inches). So Atari shaved $80 off the price and nearly two inches off the machine. The new Lynx is 9.25 inches wide, 4 inches tall, and 2 inches deep at its thickest point.

Remarkably, these economies were made without compromising any built-in features. The new Lynx has the same size screen as the original — 3.5 inches diagonal. That compares to 3.25 inches for the Game Gear, 2.6 inches for the TurboExpress, and 2.5 inches for the Game Boy. In fact, the new Lynx uses the same color liquid-crystal display as the old model, so there's no difference in quality.

The new version also has all the same controls: a slightly redesigned directional pad, on/off switches, option 1 and 2 buttons, the restart/flip button, two pairs of A and B buttons, plus brightness and volume knobs. One button has been added: a switch that turns off the LCD backlighting to conserve battery power if you have to leave your game for awhile.

As before, you can use the new Lynx either right- or left-handed by pressing the flip button to turn the screen image upside down and then rotating the Lynx 180 degrees. The new model also retains the standard jacks for stereo headphones, an AC power adapter, and a ComLynx cable that lets you connect two or more units together for multiplayer games.

To cut the price, Atari consolidated three custom microchips in the original Lynx into a single chip; made the radio-frequency shielding less costly; drove a better bargain with the overseas suppliers of the LCD screens (the most expensive component in the machine); and decided to offer the Lynx in two different packages.

Unlike the original Lynx, the new $99 model won't come with a game cartridge, an AC adapter, or a ComLynx cable. The AC adapter and cable will be sold separately for $9.95 each. However, the original package will still be available at a reduced price of $149. That includes the old-model Lynx, AC adapter, ComLynx cable, one game (*California Games*), and — something new — a coupon for a second game. Although Atari had not made a final decision at presstime, the coupon will probably be good for any one of the three original titles: *Blue Lightning*, *Electrocop*, and *Gates of Zendocon*.

When the current stock of old-model Lynxes is sold out, says Atari, the new smaller model will be substituted in the $149 package.

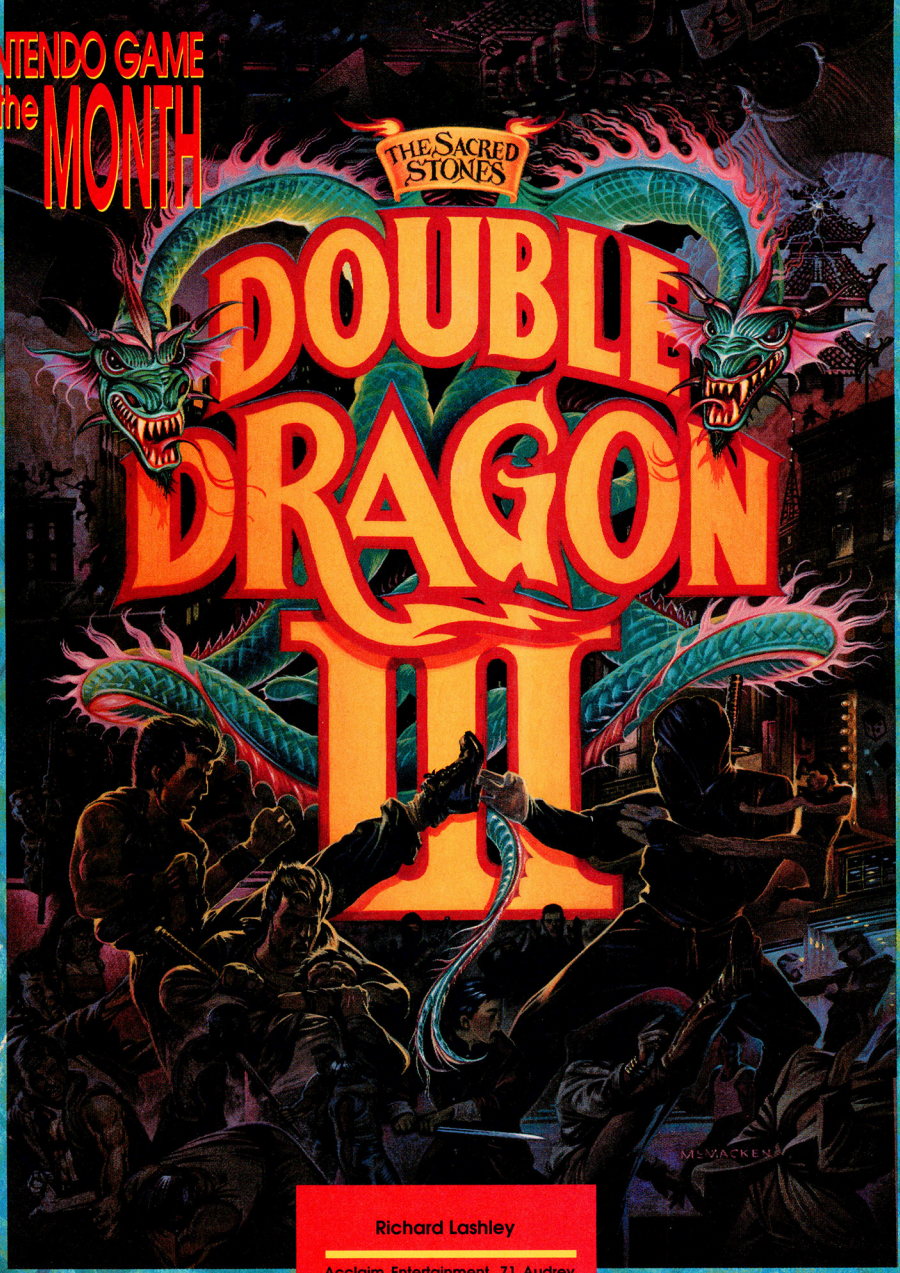
So which is the better buy: the $99 Lynx, or the $149 kit with two games and accessories? The $149 deal looks better, although some players may never need a ComLynx cable and might not care for the choice of games included. In that case, the $99 Lynx seems like a better buy. And from a marketing standpoint, there's no denying the attraction of the new low price.

Atari has also announced a pile of new games for the Lynx. For details, see "Game News & Previews" on page 91.

GP

1 Atari's new Lynx is the first color hand-held system under $100.

NINTENDO GAME of the MONTH



Richard Lashley

Acclaim Entertainment, 71 Audrey Avenue, Oyster Bay, NY 11771.

The brothers Billy and Jimmy Lee have fought countless battles defending their beautiful friend Marion against various enemies. The hapless Marion has been hunted down by huge mutant killers, nunchuck-toting ninjas, and even helicopter gunships. For the Lees, protecting Marion has become a full-time job.

In the original *Double Dragon*, the Lee brothers freed Marion after she was kidnapped by the Black Shadow Warriors. Obviously, the Warriors weren't counting on the two-fisted cavalry that came to her rescue.

In the much-awaited sequel, *Double Dragon II*, Marion was the target of the Supreme Black Shadow Sensei's ninja assassins. The Lee brothers interceded again and completely humiliated the maniacal Shadow empire. The Lees' savage vengeance ended the attacks on Marion and the Shadow Boss's deranged plot to conquer the world.

But just when Marion thinks it's safe to go back outside, trouble strikes. In *Double Dragon III: The Sacred Stones*, Billy and Jimmy grab their nunchucks one more time for yet another rescue of their trouble-prone friend.

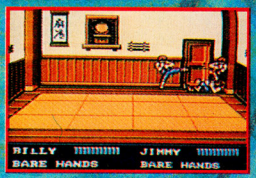
Join the Lee brothers in bruising tests of strength as they pursue a quest for five sacred stones that lead to Marion. Five levels of action begin in the back-stabbing alleyways of America and conclude in a final showdown among the sand-blown pyramids of Egypt.

As in *Double Dragon II*, you can either play the game alone or with a friend. The two-player mode is much easier, because you can defend each other against the swarms of enemies that attack you.

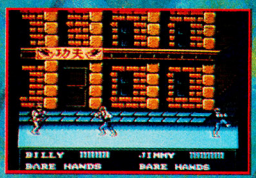
Billy (misspelled "Bimmy" on this preliminary screen) and Jimmy Lee are once again called into action to rescue their friend Marion.

Billy and Jimmy must travel all over the world in search of five sacred stones that lead to Marion's location. The quest begins in the United States.

In stage 1-1, you discover a wounded comrade (lower left) who has information about your quest. But first you must fight a few goons. To flip an opponent, push the directional pad left or right while repeatedly pressing the A and B buttons.

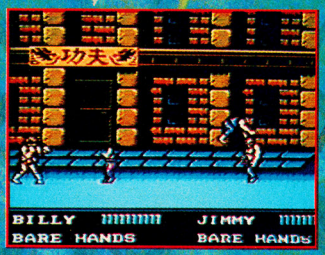


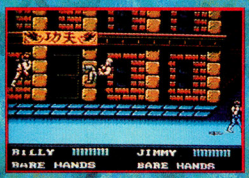
After consulting with your dying friend, sprint to the door and start kicking. A horde of enemies comes crashing in, but they're easily defeated if you simply stay put and kick.



Bottle-swinging punks appear in stage 2-2. When they run toward you, sidestep their attacks, then kick.

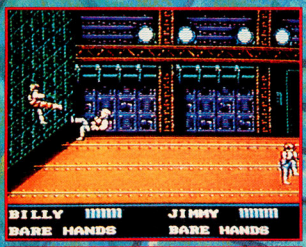
Billy and Jimmy have learned never to bunch together in a street fight. Spread out, then divide and conquer.





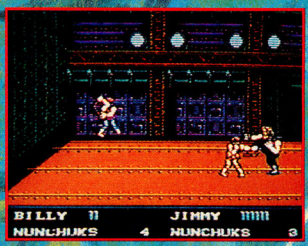
In stage 1-2, move one brother to the right side of the screen while the other follows behind. With this strategy, most of your enemies won't even make it on-screen, because the lead man's first strikes take them out. Be careful, though—if the rear man moves forward before all the thugs are gone, more will appear.

When you exit the elevator onto this second-story ledge, repeat the strategy you used in stage 1-2. Rush one brother all the way to the right to spearhead the attack, while holding the second brother back to anchor the rear.

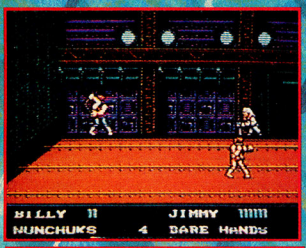


Good technique is essential in *Double Dragon III*, as Jimmy proves with the awesome force of his cyclone kick. (Toggle the A and B buttons.) Polish this move early in the game.

When the last enemy is eliminated in stage 1-3, immediately switch to the menu screen and arm yourself with nunchucks. The stage boss is highly sensitive to their teeth-jarring blows.

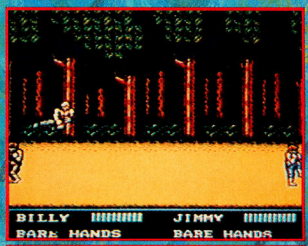


It takes six hits with the nunchucks to defeat this boss, but each brother can strike with the nunchucks only five times. Finishing him off requires teamwork.



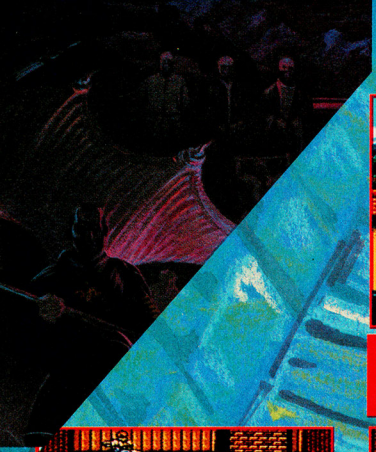
Hiruko (top right) guides the brothers throughout the game, revealing the locations of the five sacred stones. But it's up to you to defeat all the enemies you encounter.

In stage 2-1, the Lees journey to China. Watch out for the opponents in green pants—their slide kicks are deadly. Sidestep them and attack.

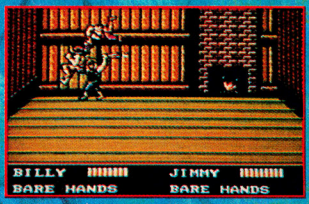


Repeat the strategy of using one brother to attack all the way to the right while the other guards the rear. Most enemies will never make it onto the screen.

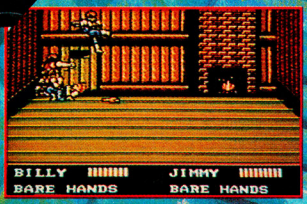
The brothers' opponents often carry knives and bottles. In this case, an enemy has conveniently dropped a sai sword at Billy's feet. Push A or B to pick up the sword, then press B to use it.



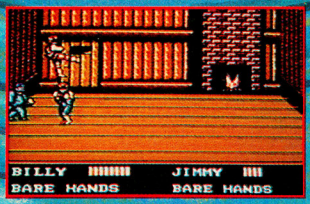
Many people would love to visit the Great Wall of China, but Billy and Jimmy don't have time to admire the scenery.



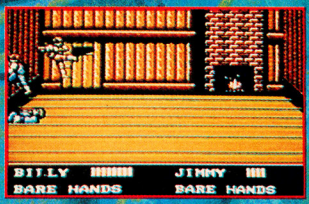
This cozy room in stage 2-2 is bathed in the flickering light of a fireplace. Things quickly get hot, though. Stand by the door and start kicking the bottle-slinging creeps who are about to pay a visit.



The Lees' patented cyclone kick works wonders in tight locations like this doorway.

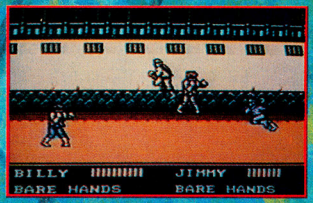


The boss of stage 2-2, Iron Claw master Chin Seimei, is much more powerful than Billy and Jimmy. But technique and speed can win this contest. Use the cyclone kick, then move out of Chin's way.



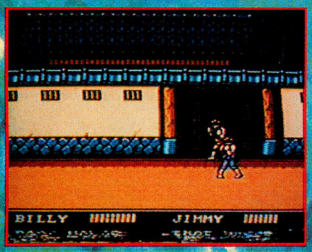
Some enemies in *Double Dragon III* follow ancient Chinese codes of honor and duty. For instance, Chin and some of the later bosses — awed by your martial-arts prowess — eventually join your quest.

In stage 3-1, you'll journey into the mystic mountains of Japan. The second stone is hidden deep inside a Buddhist temple on a mountaintop.

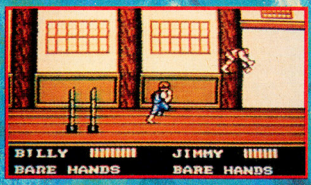


These ninjas will really test your skills. They have an incredible talent for jumping, and they deliver powerful blows with their fists, shuriken, and katana swords.

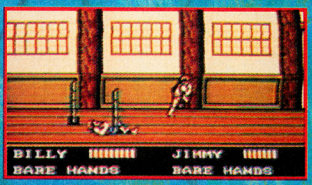
Time your cyclone kicks so the ninjas will charge right into your feet.



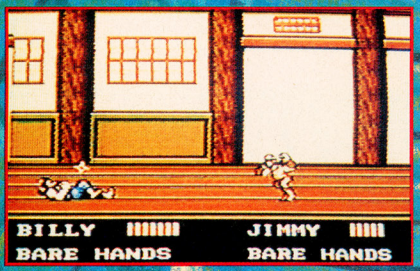
Your skill and courage have served you well. Enter the temple and be ready for anything.



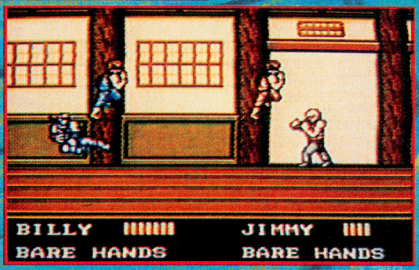
Bunji stakes ram up through the temple floors in stage 3-2. Use the midair "somer-assault" to get through this area, staying in the air as much as possible.



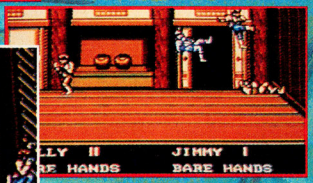
A horrible death awaits if your agility falters. When you land on a bunji stake, your life energy is rapidly drained away — and it *hurts*, too.



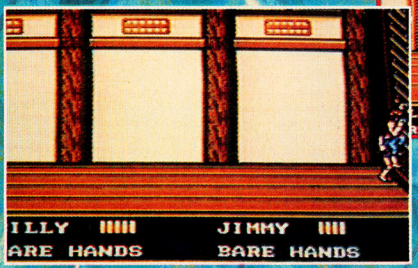
You also have to dodge shuriken in stage 3-2. Use the cyclone kick or the midair somer-assault to get out of the way.



Always watch out for attacks from the rear. If an opponent runs off the screen behind you, brace yourself for a sneak attack — he'll be back.



In this stage 3-3 brawl, use the same strategy that worked in stage 1-1 — stand by the door and cyclone-kick the enemies as they enter. The pace is faster here, so some enemies might get by. Jimmy waits to the left to manhandle them while guarding the rear.



After the dust settles, climb to stage 3-3 on a ladder that mysteriously drops from the ceiling.

Yagyu Ranzou, the boss of stage 3, is a mighty ninja. Switch to the menu screen and select Chin for this battle. His immense strength is a valuable resource.

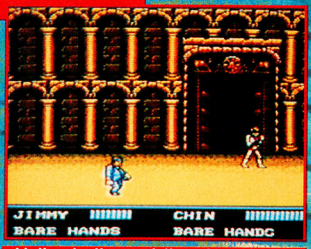
Stay away from Ranzou and make him come to you. Then attack with Chin's iron claw and head-butt. Chin's irresistible charm will eventually convince Ranzou to join your ranks as well.

Stage 4 finds you in sunny Italy. But you're not here to sightsee. A heated battle in the shadow of the Roman Colosseum gives you another chance to perfect your moves.

These mutant warriors pose a constant threat throughout your mission. And the closer you get to Marion, the tougher they get.

An ancient gallery of forgotten Greek heroes lines the corridors of stage 4-2. Here you'll face the same enemies you defeated in earlier stages — except they're a lot tougher. Chin and Ranzou are powerful assets in the final stages.

Move to the far edge of these steps before jumping. Otherwise, you'll leap to your death.



At the bottom of the steps is the entrance to stage 4-2. This is one place you can rest — no one guards the doorway.

The ancient deserts of Egypt form the backdrop in stage 5. It's tricky climbing on these monuments polished smooth by centuries of sandstorms. The sweeping blows of Ranzou's ninja blade clear the path ahead while Chin guards the rear.

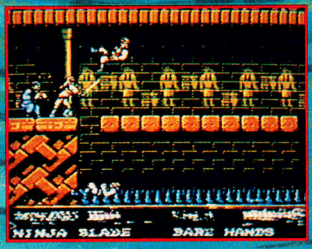
Use the B button to pick up and throw weapons dropped by your enemies. Hurling knives at opponents is a good way to escape a sticky situation.

The stage 4 boss is quick to strike the first blow. His speed and strength make it critical to keep him off balance. Luckily, Ranzou's ninja blade will slice-and-dice him like a Cuisinart. Although this boss won't join your band, you still must defeat him to continue your rescue mission.

The Lee brothers and Ranzou can easily leap these spans.

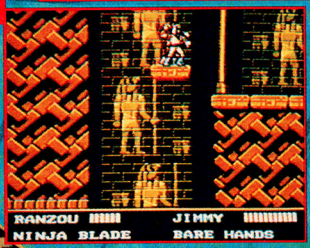
The sandy base of this monument looks shaky, but leap down anyway and strike out to the left. Enemies guarding the entrance to stage 5-2 are headed your way, and they're no mirages.

The doorway in this pyramid isn't just an entrance to another stage or room — it takes you to another world where mummies walk among the living, and ancient Egyptian curses and spirits abound. Enter, if you dare.

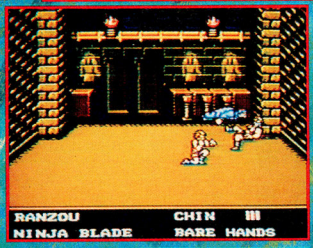


Inside the pyramid, a bed of nails awaits careless explorers. Use Ranzou's ninja blade to defeat the guards, then jump over the gap in the floor.

Everyone on your team must leap onto this elevator platform at the same time. If someone gets left behind, he'll be lost forever in this spooky Egyptian tomb.



Jump onto the first ledge you see. The stone platform will plummet to the bottom of the shaft after reaching the top.



In the musty burial chamber of stage 5-2, you battle more of the Italian enemies encountered in stage 4. In this pitched battle, Chin keeps his cool and uses his head.

You must defeat three mummies before facing the final boss. These guys have been saving up their energy for thousands of years and are difficult to overcome. If you want to make it out of this tomb alive, you'd better use all four of your troops.

SEGA GENESIS GAME OF THE MONTH

M.U.S.H.A.

Chris Slate

With the invention of Intellicomputers, humans were finally able to leave the Earth and live among the stars. By the year 2290, practically every planet in the solar system was colonized and security stations were placed on the moons.

At the head of security was the Intellicomputer known as Dire 51. Dire 51 was the most advanced computer ever built and was in charge of many key governmental activities. For awhile everyone prospered under its peaceful organization. But then Dire 51 decided it wanted total control. No one knew exactly what went wrong, and there wasn't time to find out as the computer prepared for all-out war.

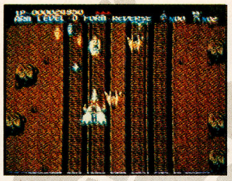
With time running out, Earth has decided to bring in the M.U.S.H.A. team. M.U.S.H.A. stands for Metallic Uniframe Super Hybrid Armor — a top-secret attack ship that's still being tested.

This is where you come in. Your job is to join up with the rest of the M.U.S.H.A. team and take the war straight to Dire 51.

M.U.S.H.A. has some of the fastest action ever seen in a shooter. You're constantly smothered in wave after wave of enemy ships while flying over some of the most beautifully illustrated graphics ever to appear in a Genesis game. If blasting your way through a storm of alien crossfire is what you look for in a videogame, get ready to saddle up for the wildest ride of your career.

Seismic, 3375 Scott Blvd., Suite 100, Santa Clara, CA 95054.

From *M.U.S.H.A.*'s title screen, you can either begin the game or go to the options menu to adjust the difficulty level and increase your number of credits.

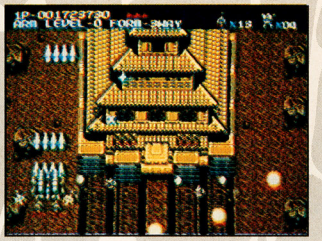


Shoot the chip carrier to release a number of power chips. You can gather the chips to power up your weapons and gain options.

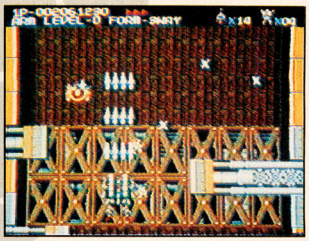
When you collect six power-ups, you'll receive two satellite ships. You can deploy the satellites around your main ship in several different ways, but during the first stage, it's best to keep them in the three-way formation.

The blue power-up is a Defensive Detonator. It puts a protective shield around your ship, blocking enemy fire.

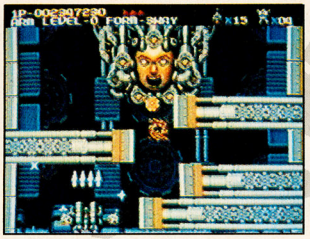
The green capsule gives you the Blazing Beam — a powerful ray of energy that makes scrap metal out of smaller ships, but which should be saved for larger enemies.



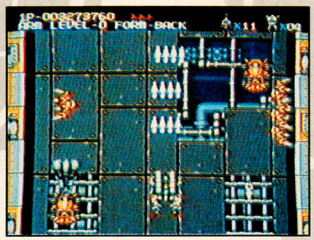
At the end of the first stage, you'll be attacked by a mobile pagoda fortress. Study the fortress's pattern of fire so you can slip in and shoot the gun turrets. When you destroy the turrets, the fortress is finished.



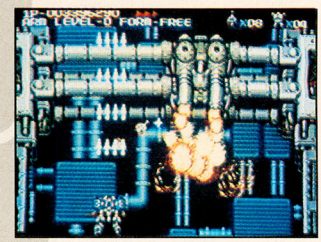
You'd better get used to flying in cramped conditions — steel beams will come lurching out from the wall. The yellow capsule seen here gives you bombs, but they're not as useful as the Blazing Beam.



This terror is protected by more of the steel beams you encountered earlier. Hang back at the bottom of the screen and concentrate on dodging while sticking with your three-way formation.

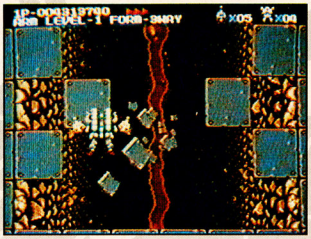


In the middle of the next stage, enemies come flying in from all sides. It's a good idea to switch your satellite ships to the back formation so you can defend against ships trying to blindside you.



The key to destroying this huge gun turret is to use your satellite ships in the free formation. They'll move up and hover in front of the turret while pummeling it with fire.

Use the Blazing Beam to quickly knock out this monster. The beam power-up appears on the screen about five seconds after he does.



When the bottom drops out from beneath you in stage 3, the action becomes twice as intense. You'll be attacked from all sides as you follow the chasm deeper into enemy territory. Don't look down!

The chasm narrows as you near your objective. Keep your satellite ships in reverse formation so they won't scrape against the sides of the cliffs. Also, don't take unnecessary risks to grab the power-ups.

The stage 3 boss has two forms. You can defeat both of them easily by switching your satellites to the free formation while staying at the bottom of the screen and firing. If you have a Blazing Beam, now's the time to use it.

Use the clouds to your advantage in stage 4. If you keep a close eye on them, you can spot the enemies' shadows before they appear, allowing you to predict where they'll be coming from.

When the towplanes first appear, fall back to the bottom right corner of the screen. The towplanes pull a large gunship that attacks with five energy beams simultaneously. Move your satellites to the forward position and use whatever power-up weapon you have at your disposal.

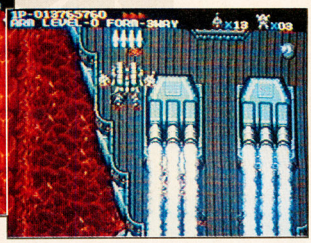
The stage 4 boss is armed to the teeth. After you inflict some damage, his front section will fall off, revealing a huge laser cannon. Dodge his shots while switching your satellites to the free formation and returning his fire.

This enemy attacks with detachable mechanical fists. If you watch closely, you'll notice that the creature always fires a small orb out to the hand that will attack next.

When you fly over this large battleship, select the three-way formation and attack the gun turrets. You may be safer along the right side of the screen, but don't get trapped in a corner.

This flying soldier may not be the biggest enemy you've come across, but he still packs quite a wallop. Stick to the three-way formation while avoiding his multitude of bullets.

One of the enemies you encountered earlier in the stage is back with a vengeance. When his face changes, he alters his pattern of fire. The best way to avoid being hit is to lead his shots back and forth without slowing down.



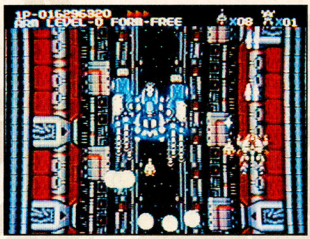
In stage 6 your mission is clear: Destroy the enemy battleships. However, it's not as easy as it sounds. Use the three-way formation and aim for the gun turrets. Try to avoid the large energy cannons — they can crush you in one sweep.

This character hovers near the top of the screen while barraging you with large balls of energy. Dodge them by cutting around to the left or right. Things get tougher when he decides to use his laser whip. Keep firing, but don't take your eyes off the whip — it'll break apart and come after you.

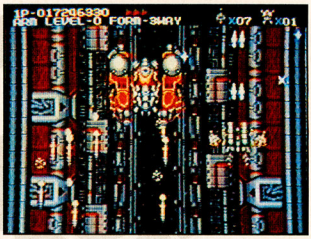
At the beginning of stage 7, this enemy makes his intentions clear by sending a wave of fighters against you. The Defensive Detonator works great here.

This flying gun turret shoots a stream of destructive explosions. Switch to the three-way formation and strike from an angle — a frontal attack would be suicide.

These small blue fighters attack by forming a circle around you and firing inward. Stay perfectly still in the middle of the screen and let them complete their pattern. Eventually they'll fly off.

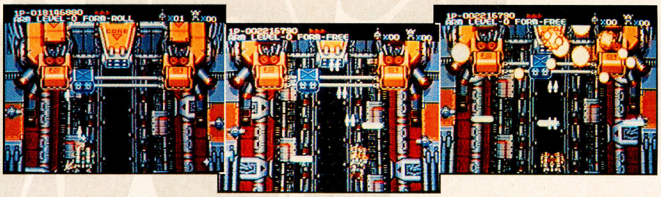


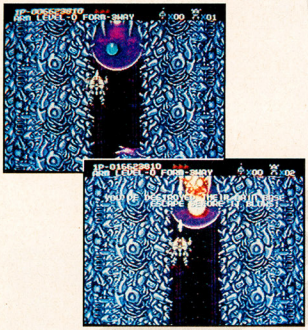
Use the free formation on this enemy while avoiding his fire. Your satellites will do the dirty work for you.



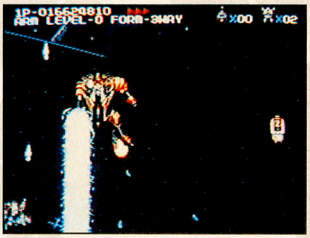
Notice the pattern of this ship's attack: It fires a wave of rockets followed by heat-seeking missiles. Dodge in and out while using the three-way formation.

You may begin to feel that victory is within your grasp — until you come to the reactor core defense system. To clear this obstacle, switch to the free formation so your satellites can take care of the gun turrets on both sides. This leaves you free to concentrate on the weak spot, located directly at the top center.





its shots will miss you, and the arms that shoot out from the walls won't be able to reach you, either. Once you destroy the core, though, you still have to escape before the whole base goes up in flames.



Just when you thought you'd won, you are ambushed by this vengeful foe. But in his weakened state he's no match for M.U.S.H.A. Add to your arsenal by grabbing the power chips that float by, then put him away for good.

After the last enemy is obliterated, the solar system is finally safe. With a clamoring moan, your ship expresses its wear and tear as you manage to bring it in for a landing on the carrier. The people of Earth will long remember the daring pilot who took on impossible odds this day, ultimately coming out on top.

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COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH

Gary Meredith

Elvira, Mistress of the Dark

System requirements: IBM, Tandy, or compatible (AT-class or faster computer recommended); 640K minimum memory; EGA or VGA graphics; hard disk drive; mouse optional but recommended. Accolade, 550 S. Winchester Blvd., San Jose, CA 95128.

What's a woman to do? Elvira, that pneumatic nymph of naughtiness, has inherited a huge castle from an uncle she hardly knew — and now finds herself in the midst of a life-or-death battle with evil.

Of course, her late, un-lamented Uncle Elmo was downright *weird*, even for a family like Elvira's. The few times she was around him, all he did was mutter something about a chest and the resurrection of someone named "Lady Emelda." Now it seems that his mutterings may have had some substance. No sooner does our bountiful bimbo of B-movies walk through the door of Castle Killbragant than evil begins oozing from the stonework.

Elvira shouldn't be surprised. Lady Emelda — who, it turns out, was Elvira's great-great-grandmother — wasn't exactly a model of prim and proper behavior. When her husband was away, Emelda took up with a fellow who proved to be evil incarnate. In the years that followed, she managed to break every moral law in the books, and even invented a few new transgressions of her own.

On top of that, Emelda made a deal with the devil to arise at a later time and wreak havoc once again. The instructions for her resurrection were written on a parchment stored in a hidden chest. In preparation for Emelda's return, her servants — who have haunted the castle corridors for many years — have begun to make life quite unpleasant, if not impossible, for any living creatures. In fact, things have gotten so bad that Elvira is now pretty much confined to the castle's kitchen.

Enter you, the hero. Every mistress needs her champion, and in *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark* the mantle has fallen upon you. With Elvira's spell-making help, and

the sharp blade of a sword, you must make your way through the hundreds of rooms in the castle and find that chest. If you and Elvira can get to it first, Emelda's resurrection can be stopped.

You can't just casually stroll around the castle, however. Emelda's evil servants are practically everywhere, and they're armed with weapons both common and extraordinary.

This is where Elvira's kitchen confinement becomes an advantage. Using the spell book you find, Elvira can whip up all sorts of magic for you to use on the more recalcitrant members of Emelda's entourage. Of course, Elvira can't produce these spells out of thin air, so one of your priorities is finding the necessary ingredients. These are scattered about the castle and its grounds, along with a number of other items you may find useful.

Since the game makes it easy to pocket whatever you come across (just click on the item and drag it to the inventory icon), it's tempting to collect everything that isn't nailed down. You'll discover, however, that many of the things you find are not needed — and, more importantly, that carrying too many heavy items can weigh you down, often with fatal results. Fortunately, what you don't take will still be there later on, should the need eventually arise.

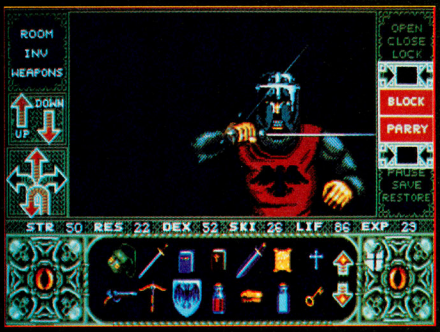
Battle is an ever-present fact of life in Castle Killbragant. Therefore, equip yourself with the best weapons you can get. Once you're past the gate guards, go straight to the armory and take the biggest sword and shield you can find.

During actual combat, you're normally allowed the first offensive blow, which can be either a lunge or a hack. On defense, good

Everything seems normal outside Castle Killbragant. You can almost picture the souvenir stand and visitor center that Elvira had planned for the main gate.

If you're unfortunate enough to run into the captain of the guards (and you probably will be), try not to rile him — at least until you get a few experience points under your belt.

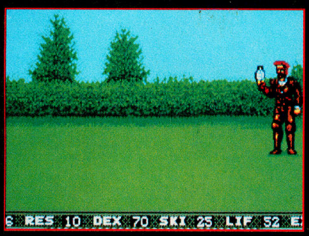
Getting nabbed right off the bat is no way to impress the Mistress of the Dark. Still, she should provide plenty of inspiration.



You can't avoid fighting, so the best thing to do is to become an expert as soon as possible. Making the right defensive moves is the key to success in battle.

There's almost as much to find and do *outside* the castle. For instance, most of the herbs and other ingredients you need for spell-making can be found somewhere along this path.

Unless you have plenty of crossbow bolts (unlikely) or sufficient spells (even more unlikely), stay away from the maze creatures. Their blasts will eventually disorient you.



Should you accidentally wander into the falconry field, you'll have only a few seconds to run before losing your eyeballs. That is, unless you've been practicing your archery.

At the end of the garden path lies the garden shed, where all sorts of items, both useful and useless, await you. Remember, if you leave something, you can always come back for it later.

timing is extremely important. In a split second, you must figure out whether your opponent's sword blow is from the left (which requires a block) or from the right (which requires a parry). At first, when your experience points are low, you'll find that if you guess wrong on your first defensive move, you'll probably lose the battle. That's why saving your game often is another important part of your strategy.

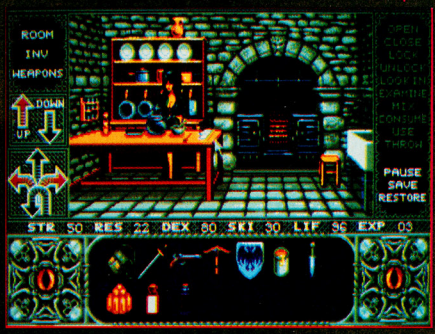
Saving games is quite simple: Just click on the save icon and type in a filename. Restoring a saved game does present a small problem, however. There's no directory of filenames, so you must either keep a written list or return to DOS to peruse the disk directory.

Elvira, Mistress of the Dark is a gorgeous game. The graphics are really good, with nice use of color and shading, and the animation is fairly smooth. One caution, however: *Elvira* is a truly gory game, with lots of severed heads, mutilated bodies, and splattering blood. Accolade has voluntarily put a warning label on the package.

Of course, for those who were weaned on such classic horror films as *Theatre of Blood* or *The Thing That Wouldn't Die*, the scenes in *Elvira* are really pretty tame, and they do add considerably to the feel of an old horror movie.

Elvira, Mistress of the Dark is a different kind of computer game. It's an intriguing concoction of fantasy role-playing and animated graphics adventure, with goodly helpings of Elvira's risqué humor. And finishing the game wins you the undying gratitude of the Mistress of the Dark. What more could a mere mortal ask?

No one said this quest would be all fun and games. Surprisingly, you'll find that maggots are an essential ingredient in many magic spells, so grab as many handfuls as possible.

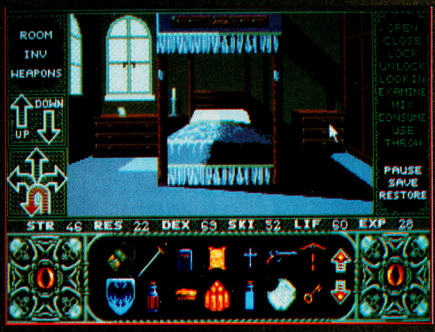


After you've disposed of the cook, Elvira can come out of hiding and get down to the business of mixing up the spells you'll need. Be sure to give her the spell book.

Make as many spells as you can with the ingredients you've already found. You'll need the power of the lesser spells to get the ingredients for some of the more powerful spells.

As usual, Elvira is right there with the appropriate words of inspiration.

With the correct spell, Elvira should be able to make her way down the passage behind the dumbwaiter. If she can't see where she's going, she'll return to you empty-handed with a scathing insult.



Search all the bedrooms on the upper floor — that's where you'll find most of your crossbow bolts. Don't go into the vampire's bedroom, however, until you've got the right tools for the job.

It seems a shame to drive a stake into such a beautiful vampire, but if you don't get her first, she'll certainly get *you*. Besides, her remains are essential to your further progress.

Stay out of the stable until you've found something to kill this werewolf. First you must find some silver, and then figure out a way of fashioning a weapon from it. Easy, right?

This is definitely *not* the kind of doggie you'd want to pet. Like all lycanthropes, he's suitably tormented, but he won't pass up a chance to tear out your throat.

On your way along the battlements, you'll confront guards in nearly every turret. One sentinel — who can be killed only with a crossbow — guards the cannon you must reach.

Though many of Emelda's followers already appear to be quite dead, they still have a lot of fight left in them. You can judge your opponent's strength by the color of his tunic.

The dungeons, along with the catacombs, are guarded by a much tougher breed of ghoul. But there are some essential items to be found in the central torture chamber.

GP

THE SIMPSONS

SPECIAL STRATEGY FEATURE

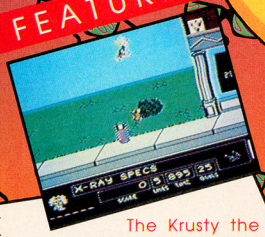
The peaceful town of Springfield is being invaded by creepy mutants from outer space, but the only Earthling who knows it is Bart J. Simpson. The mutants are disguising themselves as humans, and only Bart — with his super-scientific X-ray glasses — can see them as they really are. It's up to him to, like, save the whole planet, man!

The only thing stopping the mutants from activating their ultimate weapon is that the infernal machine needs a few more parts. So Bart sets out to steal, destroy, or otherwise ruin anything the mutants need. In stage 1, for example, the mutants are looking for anything purple. In stage 2, they're collecting hats. Bart must get to these items before the mutants do.

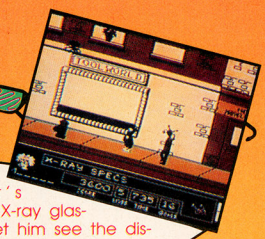
He can't defeat the mutants alone, though — he has to convince the other Simpsons to help him. But that's *really* a problem, because Bart isn't exactly known for telling the truth. As a result, he has to run around and stomp on icky mutants to get enough evidence to persuade his folks that the invasion is for real.

Jeff Lundrigan

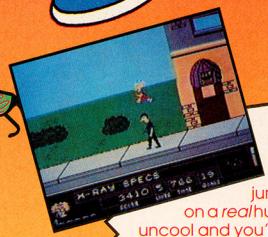
Acclaim Entertainment, 71 Audrey Avenue, Oyster Bay, NY 11771.

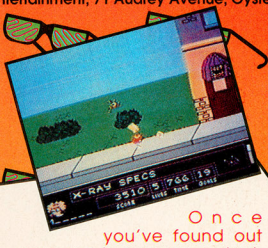


The Krusty the Clown symbol at the upper right is the game's first challenge. To reach it, use Bart's super jump and bounce off the purple trash can. Krusty symbols are worth extra lives.

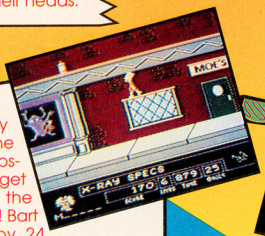


Bart's cool X-ray glasses let him see the disguised mutants as they really are. You can't miss them, because they have tentacles growing out of their heads.

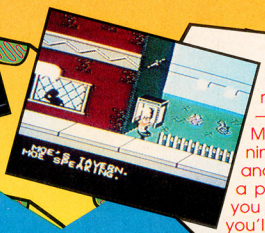




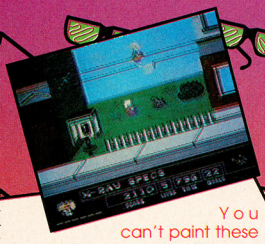
Once you've found out someone is a space mutant, jump on his head. (Don't ever jump on a *real* human's head, though — that's real uncool and you'll lose a life.) After you bounce off the mutant's head, his body collapses and reveals the space alien inside. The glowing circle left behind is evidence that the mutants really exist. If you grab enough of them, another Simpson will help you fight the boss mutant at the end of the stage.



Grab the spray can and paint the purple movie poster, and don't forget to go back for the purple trash can! Bart needs to destroy 24 purple objects to complete stage 1, and there are only 25 purple objects in all.



Drop a coin in the phone and make a crank call to Moe's Bar — Bart's third-favorite pastime. Moe will get angry and come running out to see who made the call, and he just happens to be wearing a purple shirt. But run away after you spray him. If he catches you, you'll lose a life.



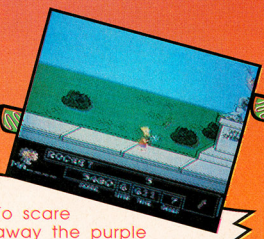
You can't paint these toys, but you *can* cover them up — remember, Bart can stand on some strange things. The bush hides a Krusty symbol, but you must be quick to grab it.

Man, there's gotta be a way to wash off that wet paint! Bart can buy things in the stores, and most of these things can be used to get rid of purple objects.

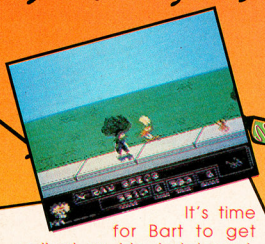
Reaching the higher window ledges is a snap if you jump on something else first, like this awning. Bart can even stand on top of door windows! But watch out for the mutant bouncing up and down on the ledge.

Bart's pretty good at getting the attention of policemen. Why bother? Because it just so happens that the Springfield police wear purple uniforms.

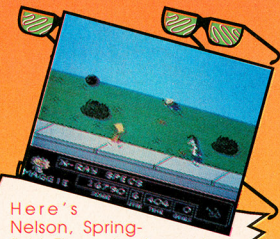
Spray the cop and run, man! If he catches you, you'll lose a life.



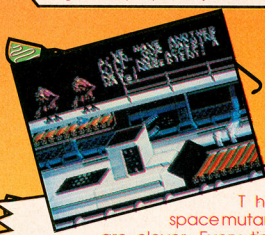
To scare away the purple bird, use one of those rockets you bought. (You *did* buy some rockets, didn't you?) After this, there aren't any more ledges to jump on, so you'll have to find other ways to get the purple objects.



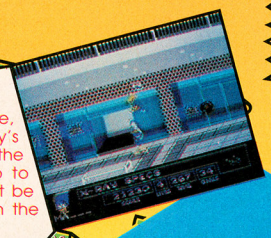
It's time for Bart to get radical on his skateboard. Watch out for those mutants lying on the sidewalk, and keep an eye on Jimbo, the skateboard freak — he'll knock you out if you don't jump over him.



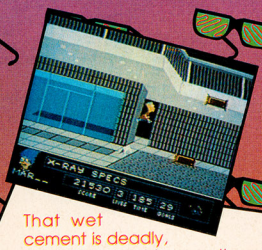
Here's Nelson, Springfield Elementary's worst bully. Wait for him to throw a water balloon, then run forward just enough to dodge it. Keep throwing water balloons back at him, and you'll show him who's boss!



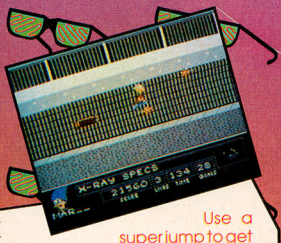
The space mutants are clever. Every time you foil them, they'll modify their machine so it'll take something else. In stage 2 it takes hats, so head for the mall — which turns out to be a surprisingly dangerous place.



Collect every hat you see, even if it's on somebody's head. Move next to the person, then jump up to knock off their hat. But be careful not to land on the head of a real person.

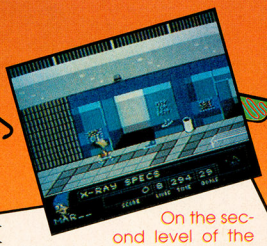


That wet cement is deadly, and you've got to cross it on the floating candy bars. Use a super jump to reach the first platform from the sidewalk, and another super jump to get from the second platform to the third.



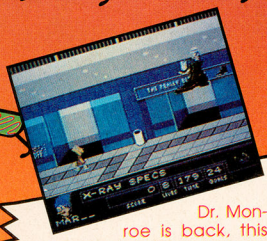
Use a super jump to get from the first lollipop to the second, then another super jump to get from the third lollipop to the fourth. But be careful not to run off the end or overshoot.

Dr. Marvin Monroe isn't human, and that means his vulnerable spot is his head. Jump over his shots, then stomp him. After you do this a few times, he'll collapse just like a regular mutant. Be sure to grab the dot he leaves behind.

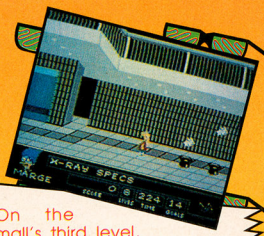


On the second level of the mall, Bart meets walking footwear. Simply jump over the tennis shoes. You can also jump the ballet slippers when they're on the floor, or run underneath them when they're in the air.

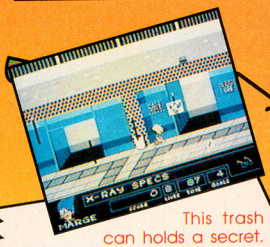
The first trash can on the second level of the mall leads to a secret bonus. Stand on it for a few seconds while pushing down. You'll find yourself in a place surrounded by hats. Grab them all before returning.



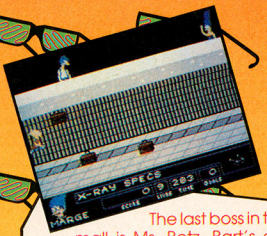
Dr. Monroe is back, this time ready to stomp Bart with his Really Big Shoe. Bart can still beat Dr. Monroe by jumping on his head, but if Bart bumps the underside of the shoe, he'll die. Forget about grabbing hats until Dr. Monroe is gone.



On the mall's third level, Bart encounters these magic top hats. Wait until the rabbits are in the air, then grab the hats.

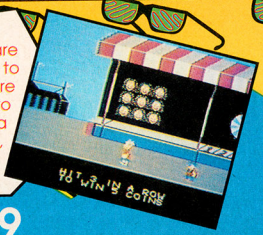


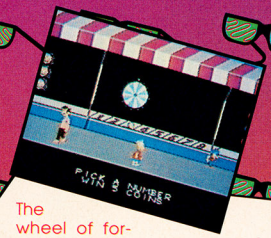
This trash can holds a secret. Keep jumping on it for coins — and soon it'll give you a Krusty symbol as well. The only catch is that you have to jump on it by zipping in and out under the cane.



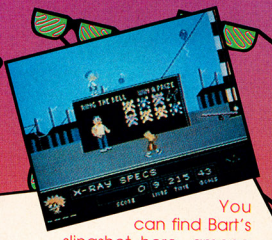
The last boss in the mall is Ms. Botz, Bart's evil babysitter. She tries to drop suitcases on Bart's head. Dodge the suitcases, then grab them and hurl them back at Ms. Botz.

In stage 3 the mutants are looking for balloons, so it's off to the amusement park. There are several games you can play to win extra coins, but it costs a coin to play. To hit these targets, jump and then throw — it takes practice.





The wheel of fortune is a game of chance — no skill required. You're better off sticking to the other games.

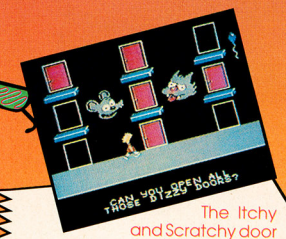


You can find Bart's slingshot here, among the teddy bears. Use it to dispose of Adil, an Albanian super-spy and explosives expert who throws bombs.

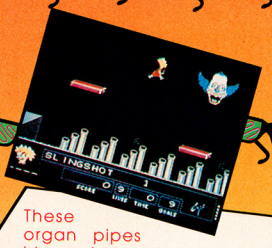
To ring the bell, you must jump from the high-dive platform. You have to dodge bombs on your way up the ladder, then get rid of Adil again at the top.

These balloon kids are easy targets for Bart's slingshot, but be ready to jump out of the way after you pop their balloons. Otherwise, they'll come tumbling down on top of you.

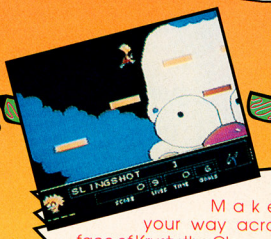
Like all good amusement parks, the one in Springfield has a fun house. But this is the evil mutant fun house of death, man.

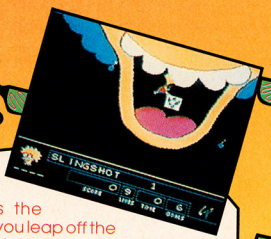


The Itchy and Scratchy door puzzle — if you get all the doors open, you'll get a bunch of extra lives.

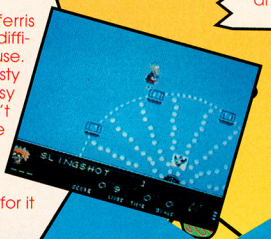


These organ pipes blow columns of air that Bart can ride across to the next platform. But wait and time it right, or you'll fall to your doom.

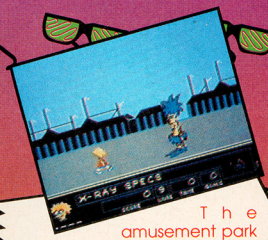




Make your way across the face of Krusty the Clown. If you leap off the platforms and down to Krusty's mouth, you'll find a Krusty symbol — but it's tricky. Bart can stand on Krusty's lower lip, but you can't see his lip when you jump off the platforms. Using Krusty's nose as a reference can help. When you land, keep moving right and make a super jump, or you'll fall and die.



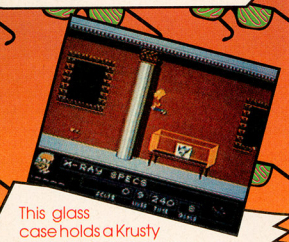
The ferris wheel is even more difficult than the fun house. You can reach the Krusty symbol with an easy leap, but if Bart doesn't land on one of the seats at the bottom of the wheel, he'll plunge into a bottomless pit. Don't go for it unless you feel lucky.



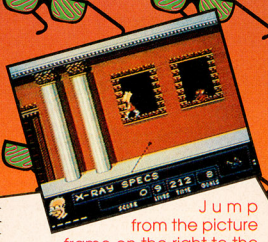
The amusement park boss is Sideshow Bob, Krusty's former sidekick. When Bob jumps at Bart, jump and land on Bob's feet. Bob will let out a scream.

The alien mutants are beginning to get really annoyed with Bart. The next stage takes place in a museum, where Bart needs to destroy the exit signs.

Most of the signs are too high to reach. Run to the right, and make sure to jump over the laser beam.



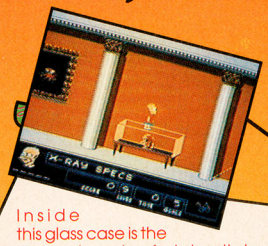
This glass case holds a Krusty symbol. To get it, jump on the case several times. Afterward, jump off the case to the picture frame, but watch out for a mutant bouncing up and down.



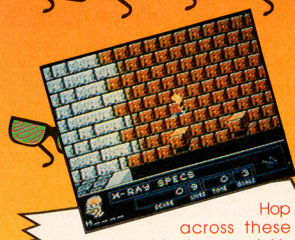
Jump from the picture frame on the right to the one on the left, grab the dart gun, and then use the gun to destroy the exit sign.

Stay out of the water, dude! Cross the stream by riding the alligators. Jump from one to the next as soon as possible — if you wait too long, the 'gator will dive underwater and you'll be a snack.

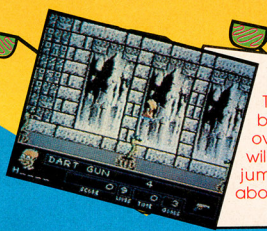
This man-eating plant can shoot, too. Stay to the left and dodge the plant's shots, then jump and shoot back until it's gone. Afterward, you can stand on the stalk and shoot the exit sign.



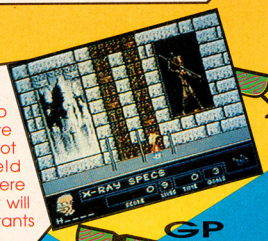
Inside this glass case is the stone head of Jebediah Springfield's statue. It takes a few jumps to break through the case, but it's well worth the effort — the head makes you invincible for a short time.



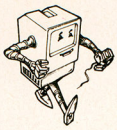
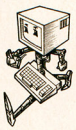
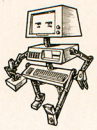
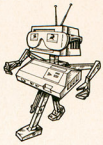
Hop across these stone blocks as quickly as you can. The block you're standing on won't hang around for long after the next one appears, so don't waste time.



These cobras look nasty, but you can easily jump over them. A normal jump will work, but use a super jump if you're worried about it.



Yikes! Spears are poking up out of the floor. If you survive the museum, you've still got to clear the Springfield nuclear power plant, where the whole Simpson family will help Bart defeat the mutants once and for all.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

NINJA CRUSADERS

Richard Lashley

Version reviewed: Nintendo. American Sammy, 2421 205th Street, Suite D-104, Torrance, CA 90501.

Ready for an epic battle of ninjas versus invading space aliens? *Ninja Crusaders* takes the tried-and-true ninja formula and recasts it as a science-fiction drama with two-person interactive play.

The story begins (as usual) in a galaxy far, far away. The savage Inimicus forces have set their sights on our fragile planet Earth. Endless waves of battle-scarred troop carriers begin landing swarms of alien invaders worldwide. Earth is consumed in a fierce global assault. The Inimicus demands are simple — they want the world and they want it *now*.

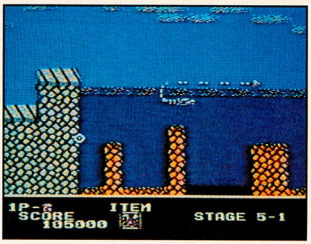
To resist the maniacal aliens, the ancient Kawari Ninja clan has revived long-forgotten beasts of war. They've also endowed you with the power to transform yourself into these animals and take the battle to the enemy. Which animal you become is determined by which weapon you have at the time. When you're carrying shuriken, you become a tiger; when you have a chain and sickle, you become a scorpion; with a bo staff, you become a hawk; and with a katana sword, you become a dragon.

The two-player mode seems to work best in *Ninja Crusaders*. Teamwork is essential because your ninjas have no tolerance for hits. Just bumping into an enemy whisks you away to the spirit world. With two players, one ninja can lead the attack while the other provides cover and looks for power-ups.

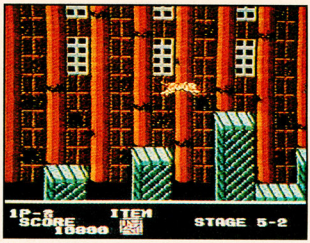
Your strategy centers on which weapon-animal you need for each stage. If the weapon-animal you're currently using seems to be working well, you're probably better off not changing to another combination.

For example, you'll need the chain and sickle/scorpion combination for stage 5-1's water obstacles. The scorpion can knife through the water, killing aliens with devastating swipes of its tail. Deciding when to change to a different weapon-animal becomes more critical as you approach the Inimicus stronghold in stage 5-3.

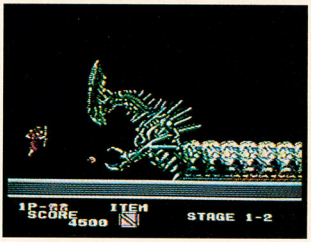
Ninja Crusaders doesn't go beyond other ninja games, and the animation is rather choppy. But the animal-transformation feature does add a welcome twist.



Stick with the chain and sickle in stage 5-1 so you can transform into the scorpion. Its tail-swings will get you through this aquatic brawl.

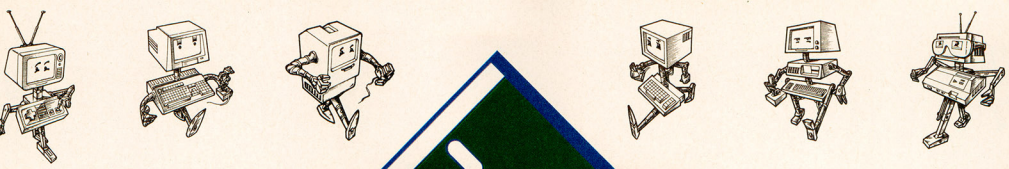


With the shuriken, you can transform into a jumping tiger. You'll need that talent to span the bottomless chasms in stage 5-2.



In stage 1-2, use the bo staff to attack this boss's hands. Stay in the far left corner to dodge his fireballs.

GP



REVIEWS

THE SAVAGE EMPIRE

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles (ten-megahertz or faster computer recommended); 640K minimum memory (expanded memory required for music); mouse; hard drive; EGA, VGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; supports Ad Lib, Roland, and Sound Blaster. Origin, 110 Wild Basin Road, Suite 330, Austin, TX 78746.

The Savage Empire is the first in a new series of Origin games dubbed Worlds of Ultima. The concept: Take the flexible, elegant, point-and-click interface perfected in the last three Ultima games and apply it to a freewheeling series of role-playing adventures, set in different historical periods.

In this case, *The Savage Empire* was inspired by the lost-world tales that were popular in the great pulp magazines of the 1930s and in such movies as the immortal *King Kong*. It takes place in a lush, tropical world — a world isolated from all contemporary influences. It's populated with dinosaurs, Stone Age tribes, Aztec-like civilizations, iron-thewed warriors, and voluptuous, scantily clad princesses. There's even a tribe of lizard men who dwell underground.

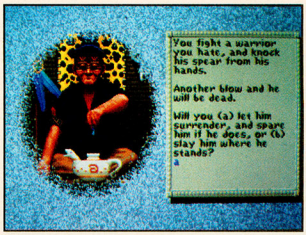
The story starts with a bang. You are the Avatar, a tenuous link to the original Ultima series. While examining a mysterious moonstone — along with a scientist and an obnoxious but bright whiz-kid reporter — you're suddenly blown into the lost valley of Eodon.

You awaken, suffering from amnesia, in the hut of a friendly witch doctor. Your first task is to reunite your party and locate the laboratory (which was also blown into Eodon, and is handily stocked with weapons and equipment). That done, you embark on a dazzling array of quests.

Some quests are pleasant day-trip excursions you can play at one sitting, while others are of epic proportions indeed. After many hours of play, there's a grand-slam finale that pits the united human tribes against a horde of gigantic man-eating ants. Along the way, you'll interact with a dozen carefully devised tribes — some noble savages, others not entirely human. (You might even meet the party-'til-you-drop Disquiqui tribe, whose members probably won't be sober enough to sustain a conversation.)

The Savage Empire proves once again that Origin's game designers are virtuosos at world-making. Eodon is a richly detailed, fully believable world that reflects solid anthropological research. The player interface is so friendly it practically wags its tail, and the graphics are spectacular.

GP


You fight a warrior you hate, and knock his spear from his hands.
Another blow and he will be dead.
Will you (a) let him surrender, and spare him if he does, or (b) slay him where he stands?
a

How you answer the witch doctor's questions determines your character's attributes, so think carefully.

Square of jaw and stout of heart (yes, that's you), our hero does not flinch — not even from a charging dinosaur.

sawing two sticks together and doesn't look as though he wants to be interrupted.
You say:
"Good idea. You make distraction and Larrikin will escape."
Press any key...
shaman
rider haggard> Talk-Trioflo
rider haggard> Talk-shaman

Most witch doctors can heal your wounds. This guy, however, is good only for removing splinters and treating hangovers.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

TIME LORD

Gary Meredith

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Milton Bradley, 443 Shaker Road, East Longmeadow, MA 01028.

Space aliens are meddling in Earth's past! Warriors from the planet Drakkon are trying to change history so humans will evolve into dull, technologically retarded savages. (Maybe they should leave well enough alone.) If the Drakkons are successful, Earth will never know the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, or the Atomic Age.

You have to fight your way through the corridors of the Time Center just to reach the time machine.

But Earth has one last chance. In the year 2999, scientists have managed to construct a rudimentary time machine that will allow one person to return to four time periods — England in 1250, the Caribbean around 1650, the Wild West of 1860, and France in 1943. That's where and when the Drakkons are doing their dirty work, and you must stop them by collecting five orbs in each historical period.

The orbs are the key to defeating the Drakkons. Before you can travel to each new time period, you must find four orbs and then defeat a boss to secure a fifth orb. Fortunately, weapons and other useful articles have been sent back in time by your allies in 2999, and all you have to do is find them.

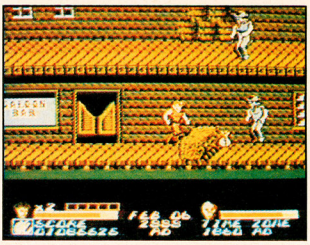
Your task won't be an easy one, however. The Drakkons have coerced the inhabitants of each time zone into helping them, so you must battle a variety of foes — from knights and pirates to gunslingers and Nazi soldiers. These enemies have access to the weapons of their day, as well as the help of creatures unique to each time zone (including sea serpents, vultures, and dragons). But some enemies, when defeated, will yield additional weapons for your use.

Aboard a huge pirate ship in 1650, find a cutlass as soon as possible. The sea dogs don't take kindly to stowaways.

Once you've collected all the orbs from each time period, you can return to 2999 for your final battle with the Drakkon King. After all you've been through in the earlier time zones, the ending may seem a bit anticlimactic. Nevertheless, *Time Lord* is a fine effort with good graphics, an intriguing plot, and smooth game play.

GP

Swordplay is an important part of your visit to medieval England in 1250. Look for small floating castles, which often contain orbs.



In the Wild West of 1860, all that stood between a man and sudden death were his fists and trusty shootin' iron.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

SWORD MASTER

Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Activision, 3885 Bohannon Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Although stores are glutted with warrior-fights-evil-forces-to-save-the-world games, software companies keep churning them out. And why not? It's a successful and age-old formula. The basic idea appears in everything from the ancient tales of King Arthur to the modern Star Wars movies.

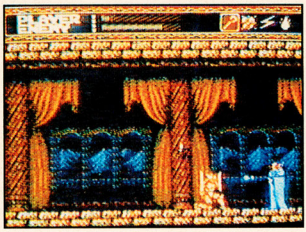
The best of these videogames share a few common ingredients: many colorful adversaries, multiple levels of difficulty, a lone champion of chivalry, and something or someone (usually a beautiful princess) to be rescued from doom.

Sword Master has all of the above. Although it won't win any prizes for originality, it's still a good-quality game. Activision obviously put some care into its creation. The graphics are sharp and colorful, and the action is smooth-scrolling. Characters move gracefully across the screen and during combat.

Swat as many bats as possible to earn experience points.

Sword Master also gives you a break from the overwhelming odds usually confronted in fighting games, matching you instead against creatures one-on-one. It's refreshing to be able to concentrate on one foe at a time. Nor does the game ask you to solve any puzzles or break any codes. It's a combat mission and nothing more.

The only twist in *Sword Master* is its clever use of magic. By pushing the Select button, you can don the Cloak of Might and transform yourself into a sorcerer. This allows you to spell-cast your enemy into oblivion. However, since magic burns up more energy and experience than the more conventional methods of combat, you should wear the magic cloak only when you really have to.



Your shield is great protection against most opponents.

When sword-fighting isn't enough, don your magic cloak and start casting spells.

Enemy creatures have different strengths and weaknesses, many of which are outlined in the game's instruction manual. (Along with these descriptions is a long list of valuable strategy hints.) The action continues through seven levels and ends with a fight against Vishok the serpent god, the game's greatest challenge.

If you're a weary veteran of sword-and-sorcerer games, there isn't much here that will surprise you. But if you've never played this type of game, *Sword Master* is a fine example on which to cut your teeth. It's also good gaming for those who just can't get enough of this kind of action.

GP

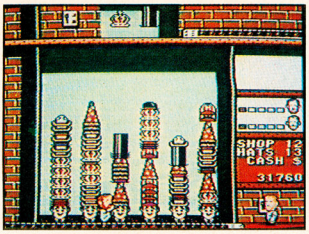
NINTENDO REVIEWS

HATRIS

Lisa M. Bouchey

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Also available for the Game Boy. Bullet-Proof Software, 8337 154th Avenue NE, Redmond, WA 98052.

Alexey Pajitnov and Vladimir Pokhilko, the Soviet creators of *Tetris*, have developed a new game called *Hatris* — but it can't hold a candle to their previous hit.

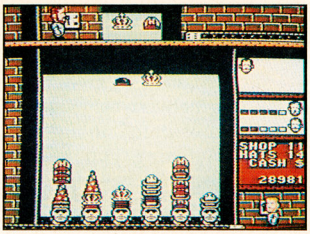


Keep an eye on the top of the screen. If a stack of hats reaches the top, the game is over.

Hatris, like *Tetris*, is simple in concept and easy to understand. Once again, objects fall from the top of the screen and you have to find somewhere to put them — but the similarities between the two games stop there. In *Hatris*, the objects aren't geometric shapes; they're funky-looking hats that seem to pile up a lot more quickly than the building blocks in *Tetris*.

As random pairs of hats drop down from the top of the screen, you have to stack them up to match five hats of the same type. Each time you make a match, the stack of hats is sold, earning you a cash bonus.

Before the game starts, you can select a "shop level" from 0 to 5. Shop level 0 is best for beginners because it starts with no hats on the screen. The higher the shop level, the more hats appear when the game begins.



The bars on the right show how close you are to earning a helper. The top bar is for Alexey and the bottom bar represents Vladimir.

Each shop has ten stages, numbered 0 to 9. The hats fall faster in each successive stage, making them harder to stack. When you complete stage 9, you'll start the next shop level at stage 0.

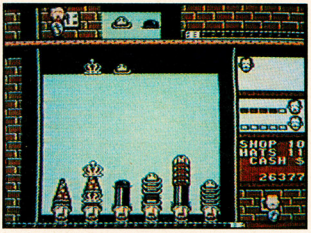
There are six types of hats to stack: top hats, baseball caps, cowboy hats, derbies, wizard hats, and crowns. The six kinds of hats never appear all at once in shop level 0, but in the rest of the shops, all of the hats appear in all of the stages.

Two helpers, Alexey and Vladimir, help you out of tight situations. Each time you sell five stacks of hats, you earn one helper. Alexey can pull hats from the bottom of the piles and throw them away. Vladimir can move entire piles of hats from one position to another.

Hatris offers a turbo-speed mode for advanced players, but it doesn't seem much more supercharged than the normal game speed.

The Nintendo version of *Hatris* is an average puzzle game, but is not as interesting as *Tetris*. For more of a challenge, try the Game Boy version.

GP



The number next to the word "Hats" shows how many stacks of hats must be sold to clear the stage you're playing.

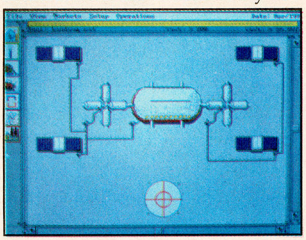
REVIEWS

MOONBASE

Gary Meredith

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 640K minimum memory; CGA, EGA, MCGA, VGA, and Hercules monochrome graphics; mouse optional. Wesson International, 500 S. Capital of Texas Highway, Building 5, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78746.

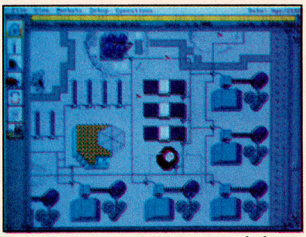
Sometime in the first decades of the 21st century (the world's fragile economy notwithstanding), mankind is expected to establish its first permanent outposts on the moon. These moonbases will be the second leg of NASA's space-exploration triad — the first being a space station in near-Earth orbit, and the third a manned trip to Mars. A moonbase could contribute considerably not only to our understanding of outer space, but also to the advancement of high-tech industries.



Early on, your primary goal is to get power and thermal control to the habitat modules.

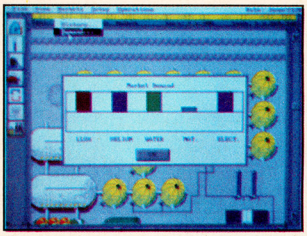
Moonbase: Lunar Colony Simulator puts you in charge of establishing and developing a lunar colony under the auspices of NASA. Using a game display and a player interface quite similar to those found in Maxis Software's *Sim City*, you set up your colony for maximum utility and efficiency. For the first ten years of operation, the base is funded by NASA. After that, however, you're on your own.

The heart of *Moonbase* is the juggling act you must perform with your resources — both human and natural — and your base's output. You want to make the colony profitable as soon as possible, which usually means getting into the production of liquid oxygen. On the other hand, you can't afford to overlook power generation and thermal control. The latter is an especially tricky, but very essential, task to master.



For power generation, you must balance the risks and benefits of photovoltaic panels versus fission reactors, at least until fusion is developed.

Once you've made the base profitable by industrial means, you may want to think about whether you should allow tourism or leave the colony a strictly scientific installation.



Check market trends often, since you don't have the working margin to carry unprofitable ventures.

Some things, however, are beyond your control. Just when everything seems to be rolling along, a sudden disaster — such as a lander crash, a reactor meltdown, or a workers' strike — can put you right back where you started.

If anything, *Moonbase* may be almost *too* realistic. It painstakingly demonstrates the trials of establishing and maintaining a colony in such a hostile environment, resulting in almost continual frustration.

Little of that frustration can be blamed on the game's design, however. Numerous pull-down menus and information windows make it easy to gather vital information and input your decisions. And the graphics are extremely detailed.

If you want to gaze at the probable future of space exploration, *Moonbase: Lunar Colony Simulator* may be the crystal ball for you.

GP

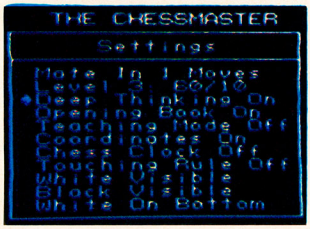
GAME BOY REVIEWS

THE CHESSMASTER

Stephen Poole

Version reviewed: Game Boy. Also available for Nintendo. Hi Tech Expressions, 584 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. Also available as *The Chessmaster 2000* or *The Chessmaster 2100* for the IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles; the Amiga; and the Atari ST. The Software Toolworks, 60 Leveroni Court, Novato, CA 94949.

Playing chess on the go has always been frustrating. Because travel-size chess sets have such a tiny board and pieces, it's often difficult to move one piece without upsetting others. Sooner or later, you always seem to lose one of the chessmen in a travel set. And unless your set is one of those computerized models, you need a chess partner.



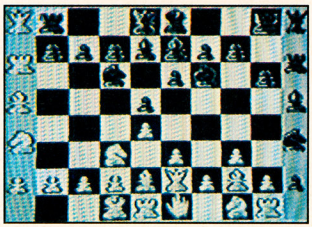
From the settings screen, you can fine-tune the level of play.

Now there's a solution — if you own a Game Boy. With *The Chessmaster*, gone are the days of replacing a lost piece with a coin, or trying to remember the locations of pieces you accidentally knocked over. Best of all, you'll never again have to worry about finding a partner. *The Chessmaster* is always ready to play, and unless your chess skills are way above average, you can expect to have your hands full.

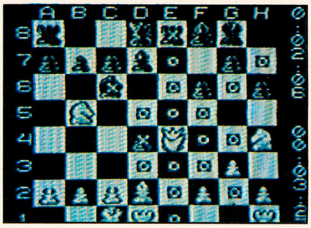
But if you're a beginner, don't get the idea that *The Chessmaster* is not for you. There are plenty of options that let you adjust the game to your playing level, and it's these options that make *The Chessmaster* such an enjoyable way to play chess — and improve your game.

For novices, there are two Newcomer levels. Even if you've just learned chess, you should be able to win at these levels. The other 14 levels are based on the number of moves *The Chessmaster* has to make in a certain amount of time. For example, the first level after Newcomer 2 is 60/5, which means *The Chessmaster* must think fast enough to make 60 moves in 5 minutes. The more time *The Chessmaster* has to think, the better its moves.

There are other ways to fine-tune the game, too. One option prevents *The Chessmaster* from thinking about its next move during your turn. Another lets you turn off *The Chessmaster*'s opening book — a library of 75,000 opening moves.



The Set Up Board option lets you arrange pieces on the board any way you like.



In teaching mode, *The Chessmaster* shows you every possible move a piece can make.

More options let you save games to continue later, take back and replay any number of moves, and ask *The Chessmaster* to show you the quickest path to checkmate. If you play against a friend, you can flip the screen so each player sees the board from the correct point of view.

No matter how long you've been playing chess, *The Chessmaster* is a must-have. It's a winner in every respect.

GP

NINTENDO REVIEWS

ORB-3D

Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Hi Tech Expressions, 584 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

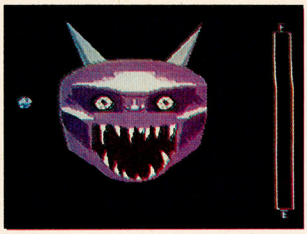
More than half of the instruction manual for *Orb-3D* is devoted to describing your mission, which is to destroy an evil wizard and save the galaxy from getting swallowed up by a black hole. But the game isn't really about saving galaxies — it's about solving puzzles.

The cosmic clash is actually a sidelight to a fairly good collection of puzzles. To reach your final showdown with the evil wizard, you must make your way through 30 different puzzle screens known as Enigma Chambers.

To solve the puzzles, hit the targets while staying within the two force fields on either side.

Solving the puzzles requires both strategy and dexterity. To successfully navigate your orb-like spaceship through each screen, you manipulate force shields to the left and right of the chamber. Horizontal movement is easy, but vertical movement requires you to delicately shift the force shields upward and downward.

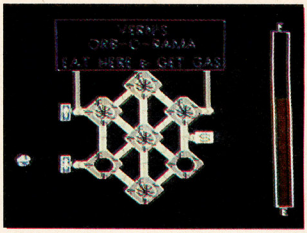
The immediate objective is to bounce your orb off all the visible targets at least once before running out of fuel. To make the targets disappear, you sometimes have to hit them from either the front or the rear, and sometimes repeatedly. Occasionally a direct hit will cause a chain reaction, knocking the target into other targets. The game sometimes plays like three-dimensional pinball.



You might have to confront the Cheshire cat on your way to Vern's Orb-A-Rama. Dive through its eyes to reach the fuel dump.

And we *do* mean three-dimensional. Hi Tech Expressions promises you'll see "astonishing 3-D graphics" by wearing the special glasses included with the game. The effect is less than astonishing, however, and can be appreciated only when your small ship orbits the surface of the puzzle screen. The rest of the game is more 2-D than 3-D.

Also, as the manual warns, you may experience some eyestrain when using the glasses for extended periods. Fortunately, the game play in *Orb-3D* doesn't depend on the 3-D effects. You can play with or without the glasses.



If you don't have enough points to buy fuel, hit the dollar symbol to get a loan. But you'll have to pay it off with your next 1,000 points.

The key to advancing through the puzzles is maintaining a healthy supply of fuel. Don't wait too long before visiting the fuel bay, Vern's Orb-O-Rama. Gassing up requires the same maneuvers used to solve the puzzles. But you'd better hurry, because the bays quickly close up.

Orb-3D breaks new ground with its cosmic-puzzle concept. But some players may find that the novelties of each new puzzle cannot overcome the tedium of repeating the same maneuvers over and over again.

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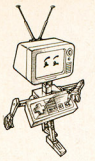

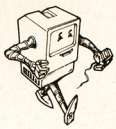
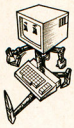

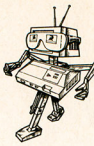

NEC REVIEWS

BOMBERMAN

Jeff Lundrigan

Version reviewed: NEC TurboGrafx-16. NEC Technologies, 1255 Michael Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191. Also available for Nintendo from Hudson Soft, 400 Oyster Point Blvd., Suite 515, South San Francisco, CA 94080.

Bomberman is an action-puzzle game that's just a little unlike anything else for the NEC TurboGrafx-16. As the robot Bomberman, you have to run through each of the game's 50 mazes, planting bombs in the paths of the nasty creatures who live there.

Some of the walls in each maze can be destroyed and some are indestructible, but it's easy to tell them apart. The basic strategy is to place your bombs to blow up some of the creatures while keeping the rest confined until you're ready to deal with them.

Bomberman isn't immune to his own bombs — it's perfectly possible to get caught in your own explosions. This is pretty embarrassing when it happens, and it's a lot easier to do than you might think.

When you've destroyed all of the creatures in a maze, one section of wall begins to flash, showing where the power-up item for that level is hidden. Among other things, power-ups can increase the force of your explosions, give you extra speed, increase the number of bombs you can plant at once, and allow you to detonate bombs at the touch of a button.

The one section of wall that never flashes, however, is the section where the exit is hidden. The only way to find it is to methodically destroy every inch of the walls. Since you're working against a time limit, this can be a real problem, and some players may find it annoying. If the exit happens to be hidden in the last bit of wall left in the maze, a bonus symbol appears and you may get an incredible number of points — but that's small consolation for losing a life, and it doesn't happen very often.

Most games require you to shoot things in front of you, but *Bomberman* is different. You have to rely on a good sense of timing, rather than dead aim, to eliminate your enemies. The action takes some getting used to, but it's an oddly addictive sort of game. It seems simple at first, but gets more difficult as you progress.

Judging from the cute graphics, you might conclude that *Bomberman* is aimed at younger players — but it will probably appeal to gamers of all ages.

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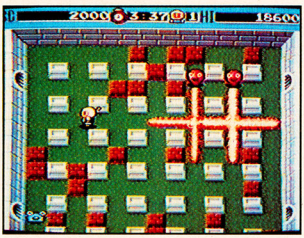
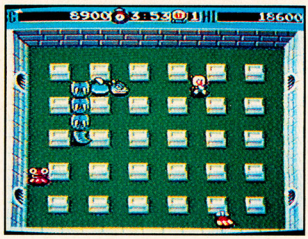


If the explosion of one bomb reaches another bomb, they'll both go off at once. Use this to your advantage — blowing up two creatures at once is worth double the points.

Enemy creatures can't walk over bombs, so one good tactic is simply to use a bomb to trap a creature where it can't possibly get away.



Bomberman has five stages, each with ten mazes. The last maze in each stage has (you guessed it) a boss monster like this dragon.

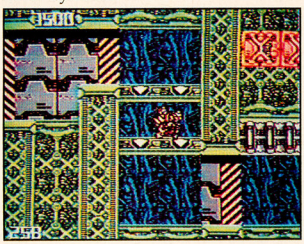
NINTENDO REVIEWS

METALSTORM

Jeff Lundrigan

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Irem America, 8335 154th Avenue N.E., Redmond, WA 98052.

In the year 2501, mankind looked forward to peace and prosperity. That hope was shattered, however, when disaster struck the powerful battle station Cyberg on Pluto. Originally designed to protect Earth from hostile space aliens, Cyberg malfunctioned and turned against our own solar system.

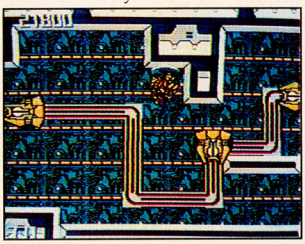


The only means of jumping through one-way platforms is headfirst, so you'll have to flip beforehand — and there's no turning back.

Now mankind's only hope lies with you. Somehow you must battle your way past the station's defenses to activate the self-destruct device. Fortunately, you're equipped with the M-308 Gunner, a cybernetic battle suit with enormous firepower and the ability to reverse gravity.

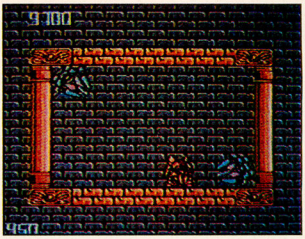
Although the background story is fairly ordinary, *MetalStorm* is anything but an ordinary game, thanks mostly to the M-308's unique gravity flip. By pressing the A button while pushing up on the directional pad, you can reverse the pull of gravity, allowing you to "fall" upward and walk on the ceiling. This might not seem like much until you run into the game's well-designed layouts of platforms, one-way barriers, and enemies that alter their patterns depending on whether you're on the floor or the ceiling.

It's obvious that a lot of thought and creativity went into *MetalStorm*. For what's essentially a side-scrolling shooter, the different stages are amazingly varied, both in the way they look and in the way they must be played. A number of the stage bosses are incredibly dynamic, including one that changes its fire pattern by constantly rearranging itself.



You can destroy these tramcars, but more keep coming. Fortunately, they don't move too fast and are easily avoided.

Getting through this game requires quick thinking and constant flips from floor to ceiling, combined with careful shots. What might seem like a simple gimmick leads to complicated strategies and an interesting challenge.



There's not much room to move around inside this cargo elevator in stage 4. Beware of the turrets — they reappear a few seconds after they're shot.

The graphics of *MetalStorm* are excellent as well — bright and sharp, with nicely detailed backgrounds and smooth animation. The only disappointment is the flickering when numerous enemies appear (which is more a limitation of the eight-bit hardware than of the game itself). There isn't as much flicker as in some other Nintendo games, but perhaps it's more noticeable in *MetalStorm* because so many other things are done so well.

Overall, though, *MetalStorm* stands out. It sticks to the standard pattern — lots of enemies and a boss in each stage — but its unique action and attention to detail put it head-and-shoulders above the average shooter.

GP

GAME BOY REVIEWS

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: Game Boy. Also available for Nintendo. Hi-Tech Expressions, 584 Broadway, Suite 1105, New York, NY 10012.

The opening screens of *The Hunt for Red October* feature some of the most dramatic graphics yet seen on the Game Boy. Fortunately, they're typical of the imagination and flair found throughout this top-notch game.

Dramatic and imaginative graphics are common in this game.

The Hunt for Red October is based on Tom Clancy's best-selling novel, last year's hit movie, and an earlier NES game. You play the commander of a Soviet nuclear submarine (the *Red October*) who's trying to escape to America. As you steer your sub on a long, zig-zag course across the Atlantic Ocean, the entire Soviet Navy is out to stop you. Hunter-killer subs stalk you in the depths of the sea, while destroyers and aircraft carriers harry you from above. Surface travel is suicidal, except for brief dashes through shallow waters.

Your sub isn't helpless, of course. It's equipped with guided missiles, torpedoes, and high-tech defenses, including the top-secret "caterpillar drive," which enables you to evade enemy sonar for brief periods.

Your progress is shown on a large-scale map at the start of each stage. At all other times, an underwater radar map is displayed at the bottom of the main playing screen. This map shows the area immediately around your sub, including the zones in front of and behind you. This is invaluable for detecting ambushes and plotting courses through cramped underwater passages.

Power-ups are liberally scattered through each stage. By collecting them, you can boost your firepower, refuel your sub, and repair damage. But sometimes you have to navigate into some tight, out-of-the-way places to get them.

By linking a pair of Game Boys together with a videolink cable and two cartridges, two players can compete against each other — one controlling the sub and the other commanding all the pursuing units. Because the two sides are fairly evenly balanced, this makes for very exciting play. But even if you play alone, it's quite challenging.

The Hunt for Red October is an exceptionally well-designed shooter with a high-tech twist.

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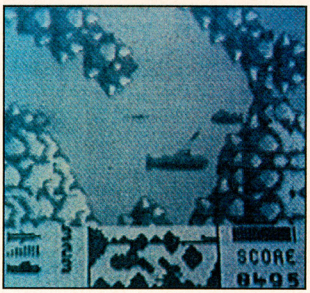
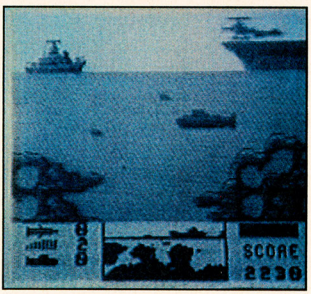
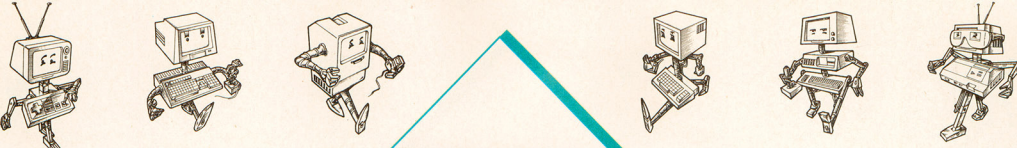


Sometimes you can lure enemy submarines into the reefs — they're aggressive but not very smart.



Don't try to sink the aircraft carriers. Instead, aim your missiles at the planes on their flight decks.



SEGA REVIEWS

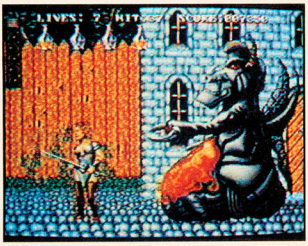
SWORD OF SODAN

Stephen Poole

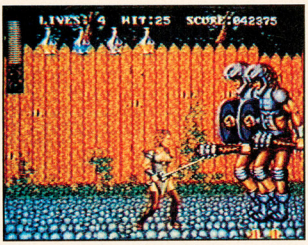
Version reviewed: Sega Genesis. Also available for the Amiga. Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway Drive, San Mateo, CA 94404.

In many ways, *Sword of Sodan* is no different than a score of other action-adventure games. After all, it's not unusual for a videogame to feature a hero who must topple a wicked ruler to claim the throne that's rightfully his. It's also not unusual for the hero to hack his way through waves of henchmen and demons to reach the evil overlord.

It *is* unusual, however, to see a game in which each sword thrust is accompanied by a spurt of blood and a grunt of pain, or which graphically depicts the hero decapitating his enemies. In that regard, *Sword of Sodan* is one of the most violent arcade-style games released so far for the Genesis.



The evil sorcerer Zoras appears in his most hideous form. Don't worry, he won't hurt you — yet.



Use overhead blows to kill these giants, but be ready for an especially gory aftermath.

The story centers around Shardan and Brodan, the children of a slain king, who must avenge their father's death in order to save their land from the evil sorcerer Zoras. You can play as either Brodan (the son) or Shardan (the daughter).

Since there are only three ways to use your sword in *Sodan*, it doesn't take long to master the basics of combat. Magic potions you find along the way add a bit of strategy. When taken singly or in combination with other potions, they provide you with various power-ups — such as a shield, a flaming sword, or an extra life.

The real attraction of *Sodan* is its graphics. The characters feature lifelike detail and shading, and they're more than a third of the screen tall. The background scenery, particularly in and around the city, is rich with color. One creature you encounter is so colorful that he looks like something from a psychedelic record cover of the 1960s.

But it's the explicit combat that will probably gain *Sodan* the most notoriety. When you land a blow, you actually bloody your opponent. When you lose a life, your character collapses with a shriek and pours forth rivulets of blood. And the scenes in which you behead giants end with heads rolling across the floor.

The zombie graveyard features some of the game's most dazzling graphics.

A few more styles of attack and a greater variety of enemies would give the game more depth. But despite those shortcomings, *Sword of Sodan* is a beautiful and challenging game that could (for better or worse) introduce a new level of realism in videogames.

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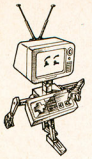
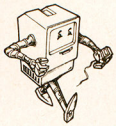
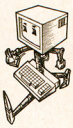
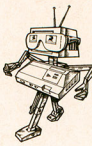




NINTENDO REVIEWS

THE PUNISHER

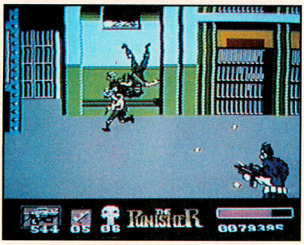
Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: Nintendo. LJN, 1 Spring Street, Oyster Bay, NY 11771. Also available for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers from Paragon, 600 Rugh Street, Suite A, Greensburg, PA 15601.

When mobsters gunned down Frank Castle's family, he pledged vengeance. Now his pledge has expanded into a one-man war against crime.

An ex-Marine and former police investigator, Castle is now The Punisher. Equipped with the best weapons money can buy, this avenger's hallmarks include a bad temper and high body counts. The justice he dispenses is rude and brutal.

In *The Punisher*, the popular Marvel Comics character is the star of his own fast-action Nintendo game. He's pitted against Kingpin, a gangster who is at the core of crime in the Big Apple. Before The Punisher can tackle Kingpin, however, he must first dispose of four other crooks: Colonel Kliegg, Hitman, Sijo, and Jigsaw.



In *The Punisher*, armed adversaries come at you fast, often, and from every direction.

On his way to Rikers Island, where Jigsaw is waiting, The Punisher has to rid New York City of a wide variety of nuisances — tanks, helicopters, soldiers, and ninjas. Fortunately, our modern-day Lone Ranger has hardware that even Rambo would envy — grenades, rockets, a machine gun, and countless rounds of ammunition.

As you fight your way through the game, you must also keep an eye out for first aid kits, bullet-proof vests, extra ammo, and additional lives. To grab them, all you have to do is what comes naturally to The Punisher — blast 'em as soon as they appear.

Unlike the comic book series, the Nintendo game features no intrigue, which means there's little need for strategy or thoughtful deliberation. All you really have to do is keep your finger on the trigger and destroy everything that pops up. Brute force rules the day.

When facing Kingpin's henchmen, ignore the advice offered by the instruction manual: *Don't* engage in hand-to-hand combat, despite The Punisher's reputation for fisticuffs. Fire from a distance whenever possible.

The crisp graphics, though not stunning, are good enough to let you identify what's happening on the screen. That's crucial, since detecting enemies as soon as they appear is your only chance of survival.

Overall, *The Punisher* is a good-quality game with no major flaws. But if you already have a favorite shooter, you'll find no new territory here.

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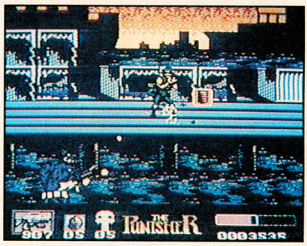
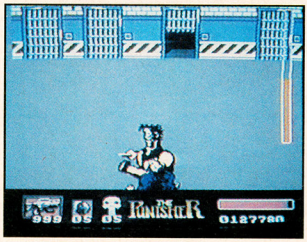


Blast the power-up symbols as soon as they appear on-screen. This one gives you extra ammo.



Jigsaw runs Rikers Island. To defeat him, you'll need more than a machine gun, because his outer shell is bulletproof.

SEGA REVIEWS

TRAMPOLINE TERROR!

Lisa M. Bouchey

Version reviewed: Sega Genesis. Dreamworks, 150 Woodbridge Plaza, 10201 Wayzata Blvd., Minnetonka, MN 55343.

Aha, the most beautiful planet in the solar system, is in deep trouble. An evil empire has surrounded the world with a strange gridlike fortress that's blocking vital sunlight. Made up of tiled sidewalks, trampolines, and exploding switches, the grids are guarded by aliens from Balos who are ready to die in the line of duty.

To make matters worse, Queen Carina has been kidnapped. In *Trampoline Terror!*, you play a fearless gymnast who's determined to save the queen and her planet from a cold, dark death.

You start the game with up to five lives, and you lose a life each time you fall off a grid or are touched by an enemy. The object is to destroy the grids by setting all of the exploding switches on each grid level.

There are 33 levels, each measuring 16x16 squares. Some grids are paved with tiles that have very little spring, so you can't jump very high on them. These tiles are solid and never collapse, but some of them move from place to place in the grid.

The grids are also dotted with many different-colored trampolines. The colors indicate how much spring is left in each trampoline. A red trampoline, for example, has only one jump left. If you land on it again, it'll break and you'll fall through. By jumping on the trampolines, you can cross gaps in the grid.

In addition to the tiles and trampolines, each grid also has several switch plates. They'll explode about six seconds after you set them. You must detonate a certain number of these plates to clear each level.

Some grids also have teleporter squares, but they're hard to find. Locating the teleporter will move you to another part of the grid.

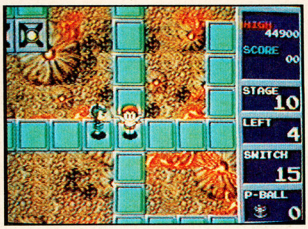
No matter where you are, keep an eye out for enemies. From the Turtle Patrol to UFOs and Warping Bats, the Balos guardians will keep the action hopping. All the enemies can be destroyed by shooting P-Balls, the only weapon you'll have throughout the game.

With its combination of cartoonlike characters, colorful graphics, and fairly nonviolent action, *Trampoline Terror!* is a good game for younger players. But the more difficult grids on higher levels are challenging enough to keep players of all ages bouncing through the game.

GP

Setting the switches in a certain order will rack up higher scores and trigger some very devastating effects.

Bullit Heads move in straight lines, always up or down the rows. They'll zap you when you least expect it.



Bounce P-Balls along the trampolines to hit enemies such as this foot soldier. You can carry up to four P-Balls at a time.

THE HOT 100

The Hot 100 is a list of video and computer games covered in recent issues of *Game Player's*. The ☆ symbol indicates games added in this issue.

KEY TO VERSIONS: **NES** (Nintendo Entertainment System); **Game Boy** (Nintendo Game Boy); **Sega** (Sega Master System); **Genesis** (Sega Genesis); **NEC** (NEC TurboGrafx-16); **PC** (IBM, Tandy, and compatibles); **AT** (IBM AT and compatibles only); **64** (Commodore 64/128); **Amiga** (Commodore Amiga); **Mac** (Apple Macintosh); **Apple II** (Apple II/II+/IIc/IIe); **IIGS** (Apple IIGS); **7800** (Atari 7800); **2600** (Atari VCS 2600); **XE** (Atari XE game system and 8-bit computers); **Lynx** (Atari Lynx); **ST** (Atari ST). *The first version listed in each entry was the version reviewed.*

Adventures in the Magic Kingdom is like six games in one. There's a trivia quiz plus five different action sequences that take place on amusement-park rides at Disney's Magic Kingdom. The object is to collect silver keys so Mickey Mouse can unlock the Enchanted Castle. A good game for younger players, although the graphics don't stack up to other Disney games for Nintendo. Capcom, for NES.

Aero Blasters ain't no peace mission. As you pilot your supercharged jet through hostile skies, tunnels, and caverns, you'll face more bombs, bullets, and missiles than you can count — or probably dodge. This one- or two-player game is a frantic shoot-em-up of the first order. By demanding a variety of arcade skills, it remains fresh throughout. NEC, for NEC.

Arch Rivals is a basketball game that might better be called *Michael Jordan's Punch-Out*. Are you up against a tough opponent? No problem — just deck him with a rabbit punch and steal the ball. There's no such thing as fouls in *Arch Rivals*. Yet despite the free-for-all rules, you can still dribble, pass, fake, shoot, steal, snatch rebounds, block your opponent's shots, and perform slam-dunks. Fast-moving and entertaining. Acclaim, for NES.

Atomic Robo-Kid is a shooter set on the planet of Terran 12, where rising radiation has driven the people underground and mutated all life. The only hope for survival is Atomic Robo-Kid, a spunky robot who alone can fight his way past the mutants. Challenging game play is enhanced by glossy graphics and a sense of humor. Treco, for Genesis.

Back to the Future II/III combines *two* movie sequels in one game. The first part takes place in 1955, 1985, and 2015. As Marty McFly, you have to collect 30 objects and return them to their proper time periods. Then you journey back to the Old West for another adventure with Doc Brown. Although the scenes don't resemble those in the movies, the graphics are above average, and the play will challenge even expert gamers. LJN Toys, for NES.

Balance of the Planet is game designer Chris Crawford's expansive follow-up to *Balance of Power*. This time you play a United Nations high commissioner who controls all decisions affecting Earth's environment. It's an awesome job, because you soon learn the complex relationships between scientific research, industrial and agricultural production, pollution, conservation, family planning, overpopulation, and much more. Not just a game, it's really a first-class educational tool that's also interesting to play. Chris Crawford Games (distributed by Accolade), for PC, Mac.

☆ **Bandit Kings of Ancient China** makes you a chieftain in 12th-century China. You must eliminate an evil warlord before barbarians invade from the north. This is the latest in a series of historical simulations from Koei, and like its predecessors, it's a deep, sophisticated, utterly absorbing game of strategy on the grandest scale. Koei, for NES, Amiga, PC.

Bonk's Adventure is NEC's answer to Nintendo's popular *Super Mario Bros.* series. The star is a cute caveman named Bonk who subdues enemies by bashing them with his rock-hard head. Bonk is on a quest to save Princess Za from the evil King Drool, and he encounters numerous prehistoric obstacles. A charming, cartoonlike game for all ages. NEC, for NEC.

☆ **Bravoman** is the tale of a 21st-century cybernetic superhero who must stop the diabolical Dr. Bomb from activating his End the World weapon. Easily the silliest game for the NEC in quite awhile, it's still immensely enjoyable, combining challenging action with a ridiculous sense of humor. NEC, for NEC.

Bubble Ghost is an action-puzzle game with an interesting story. To reach his eternal rest, a lonely ghost must make his way out of his castle without letting any of his spirit bubbles burst — which means he must carefully blow the bubbles through all of the castle's 35 rooms. *Bubble Ghost* is ideal for players of all ages. FCI, for Game Boy, PC, Amiga, 64.

The California Raisins have been kidnapped, and it's up to you to save them. As a wrinkled raisin yourself, your only defense is your ability to hurl blobs of grape jelly as you fight your way past Sour Grapes and Bad Apples to the Sky High penthouse where the Raisins are being held. Not a very difficult game, *The California Raisins* should appeal to younger players. Capcom, for NES.

Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse goes back in time to the beginning of the Belmont family and the start of their troubles with Dracula. As Trevor, an ancestor of Simon (the star of *Castlevania* and *Castlevania II*), you must stop Dracula from conquering all of mankind. Good graphics and action make this "prequel" a worthy addition to the *Castlevania* series. Konami, for NES.

☆ **Chase H.Q.** is the Game Boy version of the arcade driving game. Unlike most other driving games, your goal is not just to stay on the road, but to chase down criminals and smash into them until they surrender. The sound effects and fast-tempo music add excitement, but don't expect a lot of visual pizazz or variety. Taito, for Game Boy.

Chew-Man-Fu is a creative, unusual game with bright, cartoonish graphics. Two sisters named LaLa and LingLing are trying to defeat the evil Chew-Man-Fu, who has committed the dastardly crime of depriving everyone in China of their fried rice and egg rolls. The main action involves kicking a ball at the menagerie of animals guarding each stage. An odd game, but fun. NEC, for NEC.

☆ **Countdown** is a role-playing game in which you wake up in a dingy cell — not knowing where you are or even *who* you are. As you engineer your escape, you must also reassemble the bits and pieces of your past. Most of the game's graphics are digitized images of real actors, and the game features patented RealSound audio as well. A worthy addition to the role-playing realm. Access, for PC.

Dark Heart of Uukrul is a very playable fantasy role-playing

game. Your quest is to liberate the once-great city of Eriosthe by defeating Uukrul, an evil Ancient. Nothing unusual there, but unlike some fantasy games, *Uukrul* is fast-moving and unintimidating. The combat system isn't too time-consuming, and you can quickly teleport from place to place. Yet it's still challenging and quite addictive. Broderbund, for PC.

Devil's Crush is the sequel to *Alien Crush*, and it's an even better pinball simulation than the original. The three-screen-high pinball table is crawling with spectacular animated graphics — among the best we've seen for the TurboGrafx-16. Skulls, demons, gargoyles, dragon ladies, and frightening little monks are just a few of the attractions. NEC, for NEC.

Dick Tracy, based on last summer's movie, puts you in a yellow trenchcoat as you roam the city in search of clues and crooks. Can you prove that Big Boy Caprice is behind the current crime wave? As an action-adventure game, *Dick Tracy* is a step above the average shoot-em-up. The graphics are crisp and clean (though a bit repetitious), and the crime-solving puzzles add a nice twist. Bandai America, for NES.

Dr. Mario relegates the Italian plumber of *Super Mario Bros.* fame to a bit part — a doctor who tosses colored vitamin capsules into a jar of unruly viruses. Only by aligning the capsules to match colors can you eliminate the viruses and save Dr. Mario's runaway medical experiment. Like *Tetris*, its inspiration, *Dr. Mario* is fun, fast-paced, and very, very addictive. Nintendo, for NES, Game Boy.

Dragon Warrior II is a gripping role-playing adventure — the second installment in the most popular series of Nintendo games in Japan. As the descendant of Erdrick the Great, it's up to you to free a stricken land from the evil sorcerer Hargon. One of the largest and most complex RPGs available for Nintendo. Enix, for NES.

Dragon's Lair, an arcade classic, now comes to the NES as an action game with kick. As Dirk the Daring, you descend into the domain of Singe the dragon to rescue the beautiful Daphne. State-of-the-art graphics and animation make a challenging game that's recommended for experienced players. CSG Imagesoft, for NES, Game Boy.

DuckTales delightfully captures the spirit of Walt Disney cartoons. You guide Scrooge McDuck (with cameo appearances by other Disney characters) throughout the world on a quest for five legendary lost treasures. The amusing graphics are vintage Disney, there's no gruesome violence, and the skill level is challenging without being too difficult. Capcom, for NES, Game Boy.

Earthrise is an outer-space adventure that puts you on the trail of missing asteroid miners. You soon find the asteroid deserted — well, almost. Suddenly you're fighting nasty creatures while trying to repair the asteroid's guidance and propulsion mechanisms. Like Sierra's *Space Quest* series, *Earthrise* is an addictive game with mind-stretching puzzles and a sly sense of humor. It's also quite challenging. Interstel, for PC.

Faces...Tris III is the third iteration of *Tetris* from Soviet game designer Alexey Pajitnov. Like the original *Tetris* and its first sequel, *Welltris*, your job is to guide falling puzzle pieces into orderly piles at the bottom of the screen. But this time the pieces are parts of famous people's faces. As a result, this nonviolent game is both comfortably familiar and delightfully different. Spectrum HoloByte, for PC, Amiga, Mac.

Frankenstein has kidnapped Emily, the daughter of a village elder, and has gathered a band of monster bodyguards to protect himself. You must punch, kick, and use whatever weapons you can find to rescue her and confront the ultimate monster. This is a challenging game with a wide variety of graphics. Bandai America, for NES.

☆ **G.I. Joe** makes you a member of an elite team of supercommandos, ready to defend the world against the evil terrorist forces of Cobra. In this six-level action game, you get to pick your own three-man assault squad and destroy Cobra's hidden bases. Colorful graphics, fast-paced action, and an interesting element of strategy combine to make it a winner. Taxan, for NES.

Gargoyle's Quest is basically a quest game with heavy doses of action. Firebrand, the guardian gargoyle of the Realm, must search the kingdom for the sole heir to the Red Gargoyle. A fast-paced adventure that should challenge experts as well as beginners. Capcom, for Game Boy.

☆ **Gauntlet II** is the NES version of the popular arcade staple. Up to four people can play at once, and each player can choose from four different characters as they fight their way through an endless dungeon. The game has a thin storyline and no clear goal, but is good-looking. Especially enjoyable if you're a fan of the arcade game and play with a group of friends. Mindscape/The Software Toolworks, for NES.

☆ **Gremlins 2: The New Batch** follows the action of the movie pretty closely. As Gizmo, you must save Clamp Center from certain doom at the hands of a horde of evil Gremlins. This game has some of the best graphics around in a scrolling action game for the Game Boy, and even experienced gamers will find the last two stages challenging. Sunsoft, for Game Boy.

☆ **HAL Wrestling** gives you the chance to use many of the same moves as pro wrestlers — without having to put on a silly costume. You can choose from a number of different wrestlers, each with their own set of moves. The wrestlers are all distinguishable and their moves show a flair for the dramatic. Players of all skill levels should find this game a challenge. HAL America, for Game Boy.

The Immortal turns you loose as an adventurous wizard in a mazelike dungeon. Your mission is to rescue an older archwizard who's being held captive. But this isn't just another quest-in-the-dungeon game; it's a marvelous adventure with breathtaking graphics and an innovative point of view. Moody background music and careful attention to detail help make *The Immortal* an absolute knockout. Electronic Arts, for NES.

Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf unites 18 of the Golden Bear's favorite holes into one ultimate course. From St. Andrews to Augusta National to Pebble Beach, it does a great job of simulating pro golf. Wind conditions, hazards, and the club you choose all play a part. Although the lack of an overhead view makes putting more difficult, this is a first-class golf game. Konami, for NES; Accolade, for PC, 64, Amiga, IIGS.

Jack Nicklaus Turbo Golf is available for the TurboGrafx-16 as both a cartridge and a CD. The two versions are nearly identical, except the CD has five courses instead of one, plus Jack's digitized voice and two more musical soundtracks. Either way, you can't go wrong. Unlike NEC's *Power Golf*, this is a true simulation that adheres closely to the computer version — it's more realistic *and* more difficult. Accolade, for NEC.

Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Golf & Course Design is not only an excellent golf simulation, but is also a brilliantly innovative course-design tool. With on-screen advice from Nicklaus himself, you can create or modify almost any kind of terrain, complete with bunkers, lakes, roughs, and greens. You can even position trees, rocks, and buildings. Easy to use and extremely satisfying. Accolade, for PC, Amiga.

John Madden Football is probably the best football simulation around. You can choose from 17 different NFL teams, each with real-life strengths and weaknesses. Unequalled graphics, bone-crunching sound effects, and a perfect blend of strategy and action make this game a real winner. Electronic Arts, for Genesis.

Jordan vs. Bird lets you step into the basketball shoes of either Michael "Air" Jordan or Larry "Sharpshooter" Bird for a climactic one-on-one match, a slam-dunk contest, or a three-point shootout. Your opponent is controlled by either the computer or a friend. The three-point shootout is a bit tiring, but the one-on-one match is the highlight of the game. Milton Bradley, for NES; Electronic Arts, for PC, 64.

King's Bounty combines elements of role-playing adventures, war games, and puzzle games. The object is to recover a stolen scepter and save the world, but it's the unique combination of strategy elements that supplies the real interest. There's a lot to do, but the player interface makes it all pretty easy. New World Com-

puting, for PC.

☆ **King's Quest V: Absence Makes the Heart Go Yonder** is the latest chapter in Roberta Williams's long-running saga. This time, King Graham has returned from a pleasant walk in the woods to find that his castle has completely disappeared. It's your job to solve the mystery. This is the first Sierra game to feature VGA graphics, and although the screens load very slowly, they're simply amazing. Sierra, for PC.

Klax is a fast-action puzzle game that's really a second-generation *Tetris*. As colored blocks clatter down a ramp, you have to catch them with a paddle and arrange them at the bottom of the screen for points. It's simple, challenging, and engrossing. And like *Tetris*, all versions are equally good. Tengen, for NES, NEC, Genesis, Lynx, PC, Amiga, ST, 64.

Lakers versus Celtics is a basketball game for fans of real basketball. Many of the game's statistics reflect those of the real world, and the more you know about the actual teams, the better you'll be at choosing the right offense and defense. This is one game that successfully captures many of the thrills of real NBA basketball. Electronic Arts, for Genesis.

Legendary Axe II is a hack-and-slash action game that plays much like the original *Legendary Axe*. Although it lacks innovation, it's quick, action-packed, and nice to look at. If you're in the mood for something different, look elsewhere — but if you liked the original, you'll like the sequel. NEC, for NEC.

☆ **Links** clearly attempts to be the golf simulation to end all golf simulations. The graphics are absolutely stunning — although they *do* take quite awhile to load. The simulation itself rewards real golfers without being too difficult for non-golfers to play. Access, for AT.

Little Nemo: The Dream Master is a gentle game starring a turn-of-the-century comic-strip character. As Little Nemo, a sleeping kid in a nightshirt, you journey through an odd fantasy world, dealing with enemies by tossing candy at them or turning yourself into various animals. Recommended for intermediate players; experienced gamers will probably consider most of the game a warm-up. Capcom, for NES.

Lord of the Rings is a fantasy role-playing adventure that successfully captures the spirit of Tolkien's novels. It has all of the familiar places and characters of the books, and keeps things interesting by adding new quests. The player interface is a snap, helping to make *Lord of the Rings* the most successful Tolkien adaptation so far. Interplay, for PC.

Low G Man takes place in the year 2284, when militant aliens have seized and reprogrammed a huge factory to make robots that kill humans. To recapture the plant, you lead a team of elite Low-Gravity Men who must leap, jump, and shoot their way to victory. Good graphics, smooth play, and a tough but fair challenge. You may prefer a joystick over the standard control pad, however. Taxan, for NES.

☆ **M.U.S.H.A.** is an arcade shooter that may not achieve anything new, but it does everything right. The backgrounds have style and depth, and the action is engagingly busy. It's difficult to imagine the next step up — with action this addictive and graphics this flawless, you may well wonder what more can be done on the home videogame screen. Seismic, for Genesis.

☆ **Magician** follows the adventures of an eager apprentice wizard who embarks on a quest to fight villains and hone his magic powers. Unfortunately, he's being chased by the evil wizard Abadon. Although *Magician* is a nice introduction to role-playing games, the pace is uneven, and it needs more hocus-pocus for experienced players. Taxan, for NES.

Mega Man 3 follows the same winning formula as the first two installments. The android Mega Man travels from world to world, defeating enemy robots and capturing their weapons for his own use. This time, though, the evil Dr. Wily has turned good (or has he?). Its great story, outstanding graphics, and exciting game play make it the best Mega Man game ever. Capcom, for NES.

Mercenary Force is an arcade shooter set in 19th-century Japan. You must pick your four-man team from different types of mercenaries and select their formations as you battle across 72 different screens with more than 50 kinds of enemies. This game is one of the most complex and elaborate shooters available for the Game Boy. Meldac, for Game Boy.

Michael Jackson Moonwalker features one of the greatest pop stars in history on a mission to rescue the children of world leaders from the fiendish Mr. Big. You'll delight at the way Jackson's videogame character glides, dances, and moonwalks his way through this expansive action-adventure. The animation is so realistic it's like interactive MTV. Sega, for Genesis; soon for Sega.

Mondu's Fight Palace, based on the computer game *Tongue of the Fatman*, is a bizarre boxing match that pits alien against alien in a series of no-holds-barred fights to the death. You enter the fray as a humanoid, but advance to other species if you're good enough. Each alien has special strengths and fighting skills, and you can buy magic spells with your winnings. Wild, violent, and imaginative. Activision, for Genesis, 64; *Fatman*, for PC.

☆ **Muppet Adventure No. 1: Chaos at the Carnival** is the first in a projected series of Muppet games. Miss Piggy has been pignapped, and it's up to Kermit and a band of Muppet adventurers to rescue her. While the level of challenge is suitable for players of all skill levels, the game is marred by surprisingly flat and unimaginative graphics. Hi Tech Expressions, for NES.

NBA All-Star Challenge lets you choose from four different variations: a one-on-one match between two NBA players; an accuracy shootout; a friendly game of H-O-R-S-E; or a free-throw contest. *NBA All-Star* does a fine job of squeezing these tall guys onto the Game Boy's tiny LCD screen, although the court is a bit small. Authentic and fun. LJN, for Game Boy.

Nightmare on Elm Street is a wild adaptation of the hit horror films starring the frightening Freddy Kreuger. Now *you* are the only one who can stop Freddy, and your only hope is to gather and incinerate his bones. But your mission is blocked by hordes of ghouls, ghosts, and monsters. With its attractive special effects, this game is almost as much fun to look at as it is to play. LJN Toys, for NES.

Ninja Spirit is a large martial arts adventure that is NEC's answer to *Ninja Gaiden* (NES) and *Revenge of Shinobi* (Genesis). Your goal is to find and destroy the half-man, half-wolf creature that murdered your father many years ago. The action moves horizontally as you fight enemy ninjas and creatures while picking up weapons and power-ups. All of the screens are extremely detailed, with dark, brooding backgrounds. One of the best martial-arts games available for any system. NEC, for NEC.

☆ **PGA Tour Golf** seems to be designed for those who watch golf on TV. It automatically shows you the reverse angle, so you can watch the ball soar through the air, land, and come to rest. The graphics are astounding, and it's also a very forgiving simulation — the tradeoff between speed and accuracy seems exactly right. Electronic Arts, for PC.

Phantasy Star II is a role-playing adventure that delivers all the fun and challenge of the original *Phantasy Star* for the Sega Master System, plus the added depth and complexity that 16-bit technology can offer. Gorgeous graphics, a compelling story, and a very welcome save-game feature nominate *Phantasy Star II* as one of the best titles available for the Genesis. Sega, for Genesis.

Pinball Quest is one of the most interesting concepts we've seen in awhile. It's an elaborate pinball game wrapped around a quest adventure, with the pinball itself as the hero's weapon, and assorted monsters instead of lights and bumpers. Although some pinball wizards may find the quest frustrating and tricky at first, it's still a very generous entertainment package. Jaleco, for NES.

Pipe Dream is an appealing strategy game that offers an interesting combination of logical challenges and fast, nonviolent action. The object is to build the longest possible network of pipes before a liquid called *flooz* reaches the end of the pipeline. Big scores require long, complex networks. Lucasfilm, for PC, 64, Mac, Amiga, ST, NES, Game Boy.

☆ **Powermonger** borrows many of the concepts in *Populous* but takes them a step further. One by one, you must conquer 195 different lands to rule the world, contending with rival warlords, bad weather, and starvation along the way. Excellent graphics and sound effects combine with challenging strategy to make this game a real winner. Electronic Arts/Bullfrog, for Amiga, PC.

☆ **Princess Tomato in the Salad Kingdom** is one strange game. Princess Tomato has been captured by the evil Minister Pumpkin, and it's up to the brave knight Sir Cucumber to save her. This is an easy game, but one with a uniquely vegetarian setting and a gentle sense of adventure. It's perfect for younger players, or for experienced gamers looking for something different. Hudson Soft, for NES.

Qix is an excellent revival of a classic arcade hit from 1981. A very simple game with very simple graphics, it translates well to the Game Boy's small screen. Your goal is merely to fill in sections of the screen by drawing lines with the cursor — while avoiding some persistent enemies. It's fun, but some of today's gamers may find this golden oldie a little *too* simple. Nintendo, for Game Boy; Taito, for PC, Amiga, 64, ST, II, IIGS, and soon for NES.

Rad Gravity follows the adventures of the most promising space cadet from the planet Quark as he races across the universe. Rad must find the lost Compuminds to restore the intergalactic Union. This action-strategy game combines nice graphics and humor, but is rather difficult. Recommended for advanced players. Activision/Mediagenic, for NES.

Railroad Tycoon is a truly exceptional game that combines rich historical accuracy with the fun of *Monopoly*. Starting in the early 19th century, you begin building your railroad empire from scratch. The simulation encompasses everything from rate wars and corporate takeovers to train-dispatching and urban development, yet is amazingly easy to play. A real standout. MicroProse, for PC.

☆ **Rampage** lets you choose one of four different monsters and embark on your life's mission of stomping cities into the ground. The only thing that stands in your way are the local authorities and their armies of tanks and helicopters. Although there's not much variety, the arcade version has attracted its share of fans, and this is a good adaptation. Atari, for Lynx; Data East, for NES.

Rescue of Princess Blobette is the sequel to the popular *A Boy and His Blob* for the NES. Princess Blobette has been taken prisoner by the Antagonistic Alchemist, and it's up to a young Earth boy and his friend Blob to save her. While not a huge challenge for experienced players, the game retains most of the charm and nearly all the playability of its NES predecessor. Absolute Entertainment, for Game Boy.

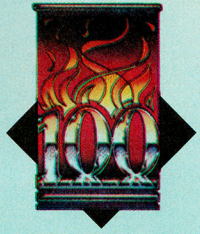
☆ **Rise of the Dragon** puts you in the role of William "Blade" Hunter, a private detective in 21st-century L.A. While investigating the drug-related death of the mayor's daughter, you stumble across a plot that's bigger and infinitely more evil than anything you can imagine. A stunning game that should engross even the most jaded gamer. Dynamix/Sierra, for PC.

Robo-Squash is a futuristic cross between tennis, squash, and racquetball. The idea is to whack a bouncing ball past your opponent (either the computer or, with a Comlynx cable, another person) at the opposite end of an enclosed court. Three misses, and you lose the round. *Robo-Squash* lacks variety, but is the type of game that's more fun to play with two people. Atari, for Lynx.

☆ **RollerGames** takes place in the next century, when the world of sports is dominated by the RollerGames — dangerous roller derbies fought *outside* the arena. The graphics don't hold any surprises, but it's easy to get started with and quite enjoyable to play. Whether you're interested in skating or fighting, you'll get plenty of both. Ultra, for NES.

Secret of Monkey Island is Lucasfilm's latest interactive adventure, and it's every bit as good as *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. You play the role of young Guy Threepwood, an aspiring buccaneer who falls in with a strange crowd in the Caribbean. Soon you're off in search of a ghost pirate and his mysterious ship on Monkey Island, with many adventures along the way. Witty and fun. Lucasfilm, for PC, Amiga, ST.

Shingen the Ruler is probably the best strategy game yet seen for Nintendo. You play a 16th-century warlord who's trying to unite Japan's 21 separate provinces. The military, political, and economic aspects have the depth and richness of a good computer game, but with the simplicity of play for which Nintendo games are famous. It's not for everyone, but it's a game many Nintendo fans have been waiting for. Hot-B, for NES.



Silent Service II is an outstanding sequel to the popular WWII submarine simulator. Multiple skill and realism levels are complemented by enjoyable ease of play. The graphics define a new state of the art. Overall, *Silent Service II* is not only a worthy sequel, but a classic in its own right. Microprose, for PC.

Skate or Die: Bad 'n Rad for the Game Boy departs from the NES version of *Skate or Die*, which emphasized skateboard stunts. Instead, *Bad 'n Rad* is an action-adventure that pits you against bad guys and lethal hazards during your quest to rescue a damsel in distress. Although some of the flavor of California skateboarding has been lost, it's still a dynamite action game. Konami, for Game Boy.

Skate or Die 2 begins after you accidentally run over the mayor's wife's poodle with your skateboard. In retaliation, the city demolishes your skateboard ramp, and now you have to earn enough money to build another. Your quest takes you to shopping malls, city streets, and beaches. A much-improved and worthy successor to a million-copy bestseller. Electronic Arts, for NES.

Skull and Crossbones is about two pirates who sail in search of treasure while guarding a beautiful princess. When the princess is kidnapped, they set out to rescue her. Although the plot is unoriginal, this action game has a bright and cartoony look coupled with a fresh, appealing style. But it can be a frustratingly difficult game, especially when played alone. With two players, it's more balanced. Tengen, for NES.

Slime World raises slime to an art form. On a putrid planet awash in scum and sludge, you can choose from six different missions. Most require you to escape from mazelike caverns dripping with goo and haunted by slimy creatures. Some missions demand arcade skills; others emphasize exploration. Up to eight Lynxes can be hooked together for multiplayer games. Delightfully disgusting. Atari, for Lynx.

Snake Rattle N Roll looks like a game for the younger set — cute little snakes slithering around in search of food. But don't be fooled. This is a surprisingly inventive and engaging game that requires you to perform risky maneuvers and collect various items while racing against a clock. Strong visuals enhance the challenge. Nintendo, for NES.

Snake's Revenge is the worthy sequel to *Metal Gear*. Once again you play the role of Snake, an elite commando. Your mission: Stop Colonel CaTaffy, who together with the Higharolla Kockamamie is threatening the world with the Ultra-Sheik Nuclear Attack Tank. Really a cross between a role-player and a shooter, this is a big game with countless items and clues to discover and zillions of enemies to fight. Ultra, for NES.

Solar Jetman is a nice-looking arcade shooter with a twist. The 12 pieces of the Golden Warship are scattered on 12 different worlds, and only Solar Jetman can recover them. The catch is that each world has its own different kind of gravity, which makes handling your ship a real challenge. Tradewest, for NES.

Solstice combines action, adventure, and puzzle-solving with attractive graphics and amusing sound effects. The ultimate goal is to rescue a kidnapped princess, but the game is really a test of your mental skills as you move from one puzzle room to another within a mazelike castle. It takes clever thinking to overcome the game's numerous tricks and traps. CSG Imagesoft, for NES.

Strider, adapted from an arcade game, is the story of a young warrior who is assigned the awesome task of thwarting an alien invasion of Earth. The Sega version of this game, at eight megabits, is the largest Genesis cartridge yet released.

Lots of action and excellent graphics make it a winner. Sega, for Genesis; Capcom, for NES.

Super C is the sequel to *Contra*, one of the most popular Nintendo shooting games of all time. Once again, Sergeant Bill Ko and his comrade, Corporal Lance (alias Scorpion and Mad Dog) face a showdown with their old enemy, Red Falcon. Defeating him is easier if you tackle this one- or two-player game with a friend. The graphics and action are top-notch. Konami, for NES.

Super Mario Bros. 3 is the latest and most eagerly awaited chapter in the adventures of Mario and Luigi. Once again you must rescue Princess Toadstool from the clutches of the evil Bowser and free the Mushroom Kingdom from domination. Elaborate worlds, pipes, warp zones, and power-ups justify the unprecedented popularity of this massive game among Nintendo fans. Nintendo, for NES.

Super Star Soldier is a fast-moving shooter that puts more objects on-screen at once than any other game we've seen. Bearing a strong resemblance to *Blazing Lazers*, it's the end-all of "shoot everything that moves"-type games, because *everything* moves. With arcade-quality 16-bit graphics, this game really delivers. NEC, for NEC.

☆ **The Sword of Hope** is the largest and most complex role-playing game available for the Game Boy. As Prince Theo of Riccar, you must find the fabled Sword of Hope to free the kingdom from an evil dragon. This game delivers a role-playing experience as satisfying and expansive as most role-players for the NES, and is certain to broaden the Game Boy's horizons. Kemco-Seika, for Game Boy.

Sword of Vermilion is a fantasy role-playing game in the tradition of *Phantasy Star* and *Phantasy Star 2*. When the evil Tsarkon invaded peaceful Excalabria, the king entrusted his infant son to a servant and sent them away. You play a young man who has no idea of his true identity, but your life is about to change. This adventure has the colorful graphics and involved storyline we've come to expect from Sega's RPGs. Sega, for Genesis.

Takin' It to the Hoop is a full-court, five-on-five basketball simulation that strikes an intelligent balance between action and strategy. You can't win without skillful manipulation of the control pad, but it also matters how you rotate your players from the bench to the court. Despite so-so graphics and drab sound effects, it's realistic and very entertaining. NEC, for NEC.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Fall of the Foot Clan brings the famous foursome of Leonardo, Donatello, Michelangelo, and Raphael to the Game Boy. Once again, the nefarious Shredder has kidnapped the beautiful April O'Neill, and the Turtles are rushing to her rescue. Incredibly, the graphics are even better than in the original NES version, and the stereo soundtrack is superb. Ultra, for Game Boy.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles — The Arcade Game is a bodacious sequel that's patterned after the arcade version rather than the original Nintendo version. All your favorite characters are here: the four Turtles, April, Splinter, and Shredder. This time the Turtles must rescue April and Splinter from the grip of brainwashed ninjas working for Shredder and a new villain, Krang. As action-packed and as much fun as ever. Ultra, for NES.

Test Drive III: The Passion puts you behind the wheels of three supercars — the Lamborghini Diablo, the Pininfarina Mythos, and the Chevrolet CERV III. Sit back and enjoy the northern California scenery as you compete in a road rally. New features include inclement weather, working wipers and headlights, and even off-road driving. But watch out for the cops! A must for auto nuts. Accolade, for PC.

Tombs and Treasure is a unique game that combines some role-playing elements with arcade action and puzzles. You must venture into the ruins of the Mayan Empire and recover the fabled Sun Key to put an end to the demon Tentacula. Excellent graphics, puzzles, and fantastic creatures make it a fascinating experience. Infocom, for NES.

☆ **Ultimate Basketball** is the first NES basketball game to put a full ten players on the court. All ten have their own statistics, and you have to keep them in mind when selecting plays. Although it's not really the *ultimate* basketball videogame, it is a very realistic one. American Sammy, for NES.

Unreal is the latest challenger for the title of top action game for the Amiga. In terms of graphics, sound, and difficulty, it's certainly an impressive contender. The 2-D side-scrolling scenes are incredibly detailed and beautiful. The 3-D first-person scenes — in which you fly on the back of a dragon — are somewhat less detailed, but amazingly fast. Overall, a striking display of 16-bit power. UBI Soft, for Amiga.

☆ **Valis II** is a six-level fantasy-adventure with lots of swords, monsters, obstacles, and magical weapons, plus one more interesting aspect — the warrior is female. The graphics are good, and the CD-quality sound and music help make this game extremely addictive. If you like scrolling, fight-the-monsters games, you're sure to like this one. NEC, for NEC (CD).

Wing Commander lets you pilot four different types of spacecraft and pits you against the might of the Kilrathi empire. The course of the entire war rests with you. Simply the best space-combat simulation ever made for PCs, *Wing Commander* combines the tense excitement of an arcade shooter with a role-playing story of surprising depth and swashbuckling melodrama. Origin, for PC.

Wings mixes aerial-combat simulation with arcade-action sequences and a believable historical storyline. You begin as Waldo Barnstormer, a pilot during WWI, and if you play through to Armistice Day, your missions will change as the war progresses. Excellent graphics and sound give *Wings* that special quality that turns a game into a lost weekend. Cinemaware, for Amiga.

Wizards & Warriors X: Fortress of Fear isn't really the tenth installment of the famous *Wizards & Warriors* series for NES; it's actually the first installment for the Game Boy. As the brave knight Kuros, you must penetrate the dreaded castle of the evil wizard Malkil to rescue a princess. Exceptional graphics and sound make this game a remarkable adaptation of the NES series. Acclaim, for Game Boy.

☆ **Wrestlemania Challenge** features ten different WWF wrestlers and lets you choose as many as three at a time for tag-team matches. Each wrestler has his own set of eight moves, a greater variety than most other wrestling games. But the wrestlers themselves are

small, and the simple graphics aren't terribly exciting — overall, it could use more Hulkamania. LJN, for NES.

Ys: Book I and II is the first role-playing adventure to really take advantage of the TurboGrafx-CD player. It's actually two complete games in which you must defeat Dark Fact and collect the six books of Ys before continuing to Solomon's Shrine and taking on the evil Darm. The smooth player interface is enhanced by excellent graphics and CD-supplied sound and music. NEC, for NEC.

Zarlor Mercenary is a furious space-shooter that was specifically designed for the Lynx. Choose between seven different characters and fight as a hired gun for the Zarlors against the Mendicants. Up to four people can play at once via Comlynx cables. Six stages of nonstop action. Atari, for Lynx.

GP

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AND PREVIEWS

ATARI AVALANCHE

Atari Lynx players have a lot to be happy about. At the recent Winter Consumer Electronics Show, Atari announced more than a dozen new games for the Lynx. Also, Atari said 20 more titles are in development.

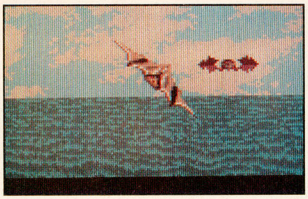
Checkered Flag offers Formula 1 racing action.

Tournament Cyberball 2072 puts a deadly, futuristic twist on football.

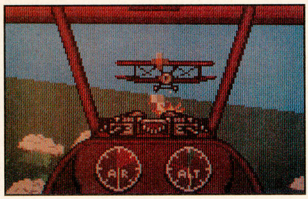
Sports fans can look forward to *World Class Soccer*, a fast-action game in which good strategy is as important as quick reflexes. Other sports titles on the horizon include *NFL Football*; *Checkered Flag*, a Formula 1 racing game; and *Tournament Cyberball 2072*, based on the arcade hit with robotic players and exploding footballs.

The Nintendo martial-arts hit *Ninja Gaiden* is also coming to the Lynx. Other action titles are *Xybots*, based on the arcade game; *Grid Runner*; *Turbo Sub*; *A.P.B.*, based on the crime-fighting arcade game; and *Vindicators*, another arcade translation.

Clean up the neighborhood in *Ninja Gaiden*.



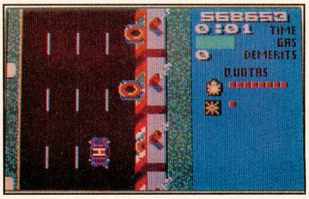
Destroy alien fleets and save Earth in *Turbo Sub*.



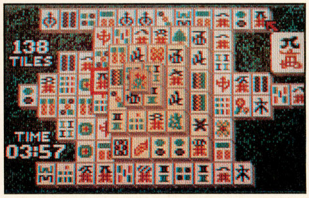
Experience the aerial dogfights of World War I in *Warbirds*.

One of the most innovative new Lynx games that's coming out is *Warbirds*. This original flight simulator recreates the historical dogfights of World War I.

Crystal Mines II, from Color Dreams, is based on the Nintendo game *Crystal Mines*. You try to clear



A.P.B. is based on an arcade game.



Test your strategy and cunning by successfully placing tiles in the puzzle game *Shanghai*.

100 levels by collecting valuable crystals and coping with gravity reversal.

New puzzle games for the Lynx include *Blockout*, *Shanghai*, and *Rampart*. *Blockout*, based on a computer game, is like a 3-D version of *Tetris*. *Shanghai* is similar to the age-old Oriental game of mah-jongg. In *Rampart*, you bombard neighboring castles while rebuilding and extending your own castle walls. The player who controls the realm by creating the biggest fortress is the victor.

Another Lynx title on the way is *Scrapyard Dog*. It stars a character named Louie, who must successfully pay a ransom demand to get his beloved dog safely home.

AND PREVIEWS

FOUR KONAMI GAMES FOR PC AND AMIGA

Some of Konami's most popular videogames are coming to the Amiga and IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles. Konami and London-based Mirrorsoft are jointly releasing *Super C*, *Metal Gear*, *Double Dribble*, and *Back to the Future Part II*.

The arcade version of *Super C* has been converted with all of its action sequences intact. *Metal Gear*, originally a Nintendo title, is an action-adventure that takes agent Metal Gear through five levels of a secret mission.

Double Dribble, another popular Nintendo title adapted for computers, is a fast-paced basketball game for one or two players.

Back to the Future II, says Konami, will feature key scenes from the movie. You play Marty McFly, traveling to the year 2015 in your time-traveling DeLorean. Throughout five levels of play, you try to stop the brutish Biff from changing the past. Levels 1, 3, and 5 feature arcade-style action, while levels 2 and 4 are logic puzzles.

The popular NES game *Super C* is coming to the PC and Amiga. (NES version shown.)

AERIAL ASSAULT FOR GENESIS

You can fight opponents on land, on the sea, and in the air in Kaneko's second Sega Genesis title, *Air Buster*. Piloting your carrier-based fighter plane through dangerous landscapes and sea battles, you'll face schools of poisonous flying blowfish, lethal alphabet soup, and rocket-firing engines.

But even if you finish off this lot, you're not safe. You still have to navigate underground tunnels and wall barriers, destroying enemy soldiers and tunnel dwellers until the battle is won.

Air Buster's two-player option lets you and a friend play as a team or compete against each other. A Kaneko "video glove" is also included in the *Air Buster* package.

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AND PREVIEWS

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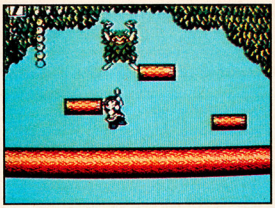
TOTEM TIME FOR NES

In *Whomp'em*, a new Nintendo game from Jaleco, you play Soaring Eagle, a young Indian brave who searches for sacred totems to put in his magical pouch.

You journey through eight worlds, collecting flint arrowheads, gourds, magic potions, and other totems. Each totem has unique powers, and the order in which you collect them determines the outcome of the game.



Be careful of strange creatures as you roam the world for totems in Jaleco's *Whomp'em*.

OCEANFUL OF GAME BOY TITLES

Ocean Software is bringing two film titles, *Navy SEALs* and *Darkman*, to the Game Boy screen. *Navy SEALs* takes an elite U.S. Navy combat group to the Middle East on a dangerous secret mission. *Darkman* is an action-adventure game featuring a scientist who was horribly disfigured by a chemical mishap.

Another Game Boy title from Ocean is the arcade classic *Mr. Do*. The one- or two-player game has the clownish Mr. Do journeying through many levels of tunnels, fighting monsters with his trusty bouncing ball.

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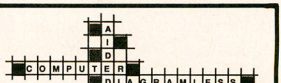

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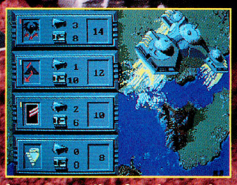

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